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Editor : Smt. Sulochana Rajendran

ADIEU, K. S. MAHADEVAN

Shri K. S. Mahadevan, Editor of this Journal for the last thirteen-and-half years has laid down his office. The Managing Committee has accepted his resignation with regret. The SHANMUKHA has been one of the shining limbs of this prestigious Sabha.

During his tenure as Editor from its inception in April, 1975, SHANMUKHA has risen to be an authoritative journal, representing all that is dignified and true in our artistic tradition. Shri Mahadevan, a music critic of INDIAN EXPRESS, Bombay, for many years until his departure to Madras, where he is now the popular music critic of INDIAN EXPRESS, Madras, brought to bear upon his editorial duties a high sense of responsibility and of a mission, to enlighten the public on various important aspects of our great traditions in Karnatic music.

His close contacts, even on a personal level, with stalwarts like Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Palghat Mani Iyer, etc., in the field of perform-

ing arts and also with the heads of teaching institutions in Bombay, Bangalore, Madras, Delhi, etc., enabled Shri Mahadevan to obtain highly instructive and interesting articles for SHANMUKHA. To his credit be it said that he maintained the dignity of the Journal on a consistently high plane and ensured that its contents threw light on many obscure, little known aspects of music and dance in a way that made it very useful even for research students and seekers of musical lore.

Today the number and variety of contributors to SHANMUKHA, drawn from diverse disciplines, is its unique asset. This by itself is no mean contribution of Shri Mahadevan, as it guarantees credibility and reliability of its contents.

We are happy that Shri Mahadevan has agreed to be an editorial adviser and assist in maintaining the quality and usefulness of SHANMUKHA.

Managing Committee

[illegible]

Dr. (Smt.) SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN, a Member of the Managing Committee, has since taken over as the Hon. Editor, the new Publisher being Shri S. SESHADRI.

In view of the change over, the delay in releasing the January, 1989, issue of SHANMUKHA became unavoidable. Readers, we are sure, will for bear.

SHANMUKHA WISHES ITS READERS A PROSPEROUS

NEW YEAR

NEW YEAR

MUSIC, THY NAME IS THYAGARAJA

By

S. RAMACHANDRAN

Music is as old as the advent of Man himself on the planet of Earth. Every activity in life presupposes a want. Even the babe coming out of the mother's womb cries out denoting a want. In the dim beginnings, man's wants were primarily food and shelter. Later, certain finer needs came up as his subsidiary priorities.

Creative Upsurge

He reacted to whatever he saw, heard, felt and experienced. It goaded him to music and rhythm too. It was a matter of action and interaction with the influences in his surroundings. With the twang of metallic strings, he modulated his voice expression high and low. He packed into his voice overtones and dimensions, now expanding, now diminishing. It turned out to be a thrilling creative upsurge. He thought it fit to subject his output to a rhythmic monitor and well thought-out cannons of scientific procedure. Certain restraints and regulations therefore followed to shape up the scheme of his creativity. It lent a colour, an elegance, a sense of involvement and bliss. His emotional parameters and assimilating potential accepted certain trends that were soft in the creative scheme, while a few that appeared rather virile and off-beat were conveniently isolated.

Aesthetic Fulfilment

Aesthetics thus butted in to seek its identity giving room for a tradition to

grow and institutionalise over a period of time. Briefly, the whole programme of excellence exercised an appeal which provided man an emotional well-being, aesthetic fulfilment and even experience of the transcendental. It is now a quality for the inspired muse to radiate the transcendental experience. True quality of the purest merit is born out of inspiration. It is often a quality more unconsciously derived. It is a faculty that transcends ordinary levels of human intelligence. We might say that it is the musician's intuitive perception which surmounts all barriers and limitations of space and time. It augurs spiritual bliss, truth and beauty of permanent value.

Thyagaraja — A Harmonious Synthesis

Having said spiritual bliss, truth and poetic beauty, it is to make a straight statement that Thyagaraja represents what may be called a harmonious synthesis of transcendental music, poetic beauty and spiritual truth and philosophy. His hundreds of compositions are an example of unquestioned inspiration. The fact that year after year, even after a hundred and fifty years of his departure from this terrestrial world, Bahula Panchami is being religiously looked forward to and a festival is being celebrated all the world over to perpetuate his memory speak abundantly of his unique stature. Music was his ordained calling which he accepted as a form of worship. He put it to use for his spiritual upliftment through devotio-

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nal compositions. He conveys this message in very unmistakable terms free from any intellectual fuss or highfalutin dogmas. In the words of Coleridge, "Best sort of music is what it should be sacred". Verily, Thyagaraja's music is supreme in this context.

Spiritual and Philosophical

True to Indian traditional moorings, Thyagaraja adhered to Hindu metaphysical thought. The world was something illusory in his concept and "ultimate reality" naturally meant emancipation from the ties of the world. He believed in the Upanishads, Vedas and Sastras. His faith was that "self" is not a theoretical matter. It is essentially in the nature of a direct realisation of actual experience as summarised in the saying. "TAT TVAMASI". This is what he has portrayed in the song, *Tatva meruga* (Garudadhvani). He believed in the succession of births, rebirths and its cosmic significance. Again, his faith in the philosophy of Karma is well illustrated in the song, *Kalanerchina* (Dipakam).

One would not fail to take note, for an example, that in the Charanam of *Sukhi Evaro* (Kanada) he vouchsafes that there cannot be greater happiness than flawless and tuneful music sung untiringly in the name of the Lord. The song, *Sangita sastra gnanamu* (Mukhari) goes a step further and proclaims that apart from all the gleams of joy accruing out of mundane possessions and glory, music has something permanent to offer which is the ultimate bliss of one-ness with God Himself. Again, his *Sitavara* (Devagandhari) is a prayer that he be granted the gift of pure musical faculty in order that music

could be his devotional forum to attain salvation.

Emotional Dialogue

It is well known that within the ken of his perception, Thyagaraja articulated Rama as God and had chosen to have a dialogue at a very personal level with him in emotional musical expressions. However, it is to mention that his sense of catholicity and tolerance to other modes of worship is distinctly noticeable as brought out in *Vinata suta vahana* (Jayanthasena). One would note here Thyagaraja vindicates the shock-proof mantle that ensconces the unique spirit of Hinduism.

Another brilliant feature of Thyagaraja's thinking mind is his abject surrender to God in the manner of a sinner seeking protection. Let us refer to *Dudugala* (Gowla Pancharatna). He makes a confession that he is caught up in the meshes of petty jealousies so characteristic of the way of the world. He regrets his association with the depraved and people of an inferior order. He therefore seeks redemption and asks his Lord to forgive him, unconditionally condoning his sins. There cannot be better proof of his unflinching faith in God and the spirit of divinity that ultimately arbitrates the helm of affairs for the material phenomena.

Poetic Beauty

Thyagaraja affirms again and again that the human being has his endless imperfections and to think of God in the abstract is impossible. What with the currents, cross-currents and whirlpools in his process of thinking, he is not capable of effective contemplation. Of necessity, he must think of God in very concrete terms. To visualise the

infinite, man has to deploy the means of the finite. It occurred to Thyagaraja that Lord Ramachandra could be the ideal concrete form with his multifaceted personality in order that contemplation would be effective. Understandably, the wide range of associations like Rama and Sita, Rama and Lakshmana, Rama and Hanuman and so on has been the chosen theme for his musical outpourings.

Musical Artistry

A mind refined by musical phrases and harmony of sounds is in a fitting state for contemplation and trance. It is a state that generates love and peace. It infuses pathos to our prayer transmuting our invocations into something sacred. In understandable terms, this is Bhakthi in music. According to Thyagaraja, lyrical excellence in music is barren and sterile when it is not imbued with Bhakti. Bhakti is something that inheres in the raga bhava augmenting the lyrical quality of musical compositions. It intensifies the emotional significance of words employed in the composition. The interplay of raga bhava and lyrical excellence provides muscle and fineness of texture. In *Nadasudharasa (Arabhi)*, Thyagaraja attributes to his hero Rama the essence of the effect of sweet and harmonious sounds. His imagination runs prolific in that he compares the qualities of his Hero to the various elements of music. The song is an outstanding piece from the point of view of poetic merit. As a poet here, Thyagaraja even sets one seriously think that music or the effect of sound is an end in itself.

By and large, Thyagaraja's compositions are exemplary logical syllogisms stage-wise and coherently developed. The theme is packed in a progressive order of sequences. A general truth

is enunciated first and that is substantiated by the events that follow later in the order of time. The song, *Sarasa samadana* (Kapi Narayani) may be quoted as an example. His compositions are by no stretch of imagination a desultory conglomeration of ideas, but they are serious and steady products of clear thinking and intellectual responsibility.

It would be accepted on all hands, that lyrics handled for musical elaboration should provide more of music than grandiose expression of words. The fewer the words employed, the greater the musical appeal. From this point of view, Thyagaraja's compositions stand unsurpassed. They carry limited number of words or syllables with much meaning condensed into them. Niraval and musical expression of the theme in a myriad ways can, therefore, be effectively articulated by musicians. We may refer to any of his songs; this aspect is amply justified.

Modes Highlighting Sentiments

Let us now examine his selection of the raga for portraying the lyrical theme, for example, in *Ma Janaki* ! It is composed in Kambodi. The theme in essence is a glorification of Rama for all his prowess and capabilities. Although the various sequences of trouble which Sita came across in the great epic could have been easily surmounted at her level, she being Mother Earth herself, she left it exclusively to Rama to fight out the situation by exercise of his strength and finally emerge victorious. The employment of raga Kambodi is most appropriate in the perspective involved. The melody is shadava-sampoorna in form. The music that exudes in the jump 'pa dha sa' skipping nishada, so characteristic for the melody, carries an overtone of vitality, vigour and victory.

While highlighting the element of Rama's victory and advocating his credentials, undoubtedly a virile spirit of vibrant musical notations is what is called for. This exactly is what Thyagaraja has done in the Anupallavi which runs to notation : "pa dha sa ni ni dha pa dha, saa saa". We would also not fail to note that madhyama and thara sthayis are put to use in the composition, while mandara is not employed at all. The song is set to madhyamakala where the Niraval in stance, *Vaani maata lagu* is admittedly a matter of extreme artistic felicity and popular delight.

One would not at this stage, resist calling up in one's mind the profile of the late GNB at whose hands the Niraval of this sequence used to touch the watermark in creative glory!! With pleasing Sarvalagu tempo, he would caress on the subtle nuances of the melody besides bringing home the sentiments underlying the song content.

Nuances Breathing Emotions

The Kaikavasi song, *Vachama gocharame*, is another example of poetic artistry. While the theme of the song would imply that Rama let go an arrow only to take away its tail, as Sita wished for it, the deer preferred sacrifice of its neck (life) to a deformity by losing its tail. Evidently, it held its modesty and honour above everything. The Charanam of the song contains much meaning. Again, it is to note that the occasional use of Shatsruthi Dhaivata, so unique to the raga Kaikavasi as the song is rendered, is only too appropriate to admit of any comparison. It helps harmonise with the bhava of the song which brings to focus an exemplary lyrical pen picture, the like of which is hardly noticeable in classic or modern romantic poetry. It is to appreciate that Thyagaraja distinctly articu-

lates the animal's mental anguish and the effort on its part to save its modesty by subjecting its very neck to Rama's arrow. Could there be a better application and understanding of the use of Shatsruthi Dhaivata other than the context under reference ?

I have heard the late Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer sing this song with due stress on Shatsruthi Dhaivata so as to highlight the Bhava of the composition set in Kaikavasi, a derivative melody of Nitimati. One would easily say without a second thought that these two songs exclusively by themselves are good enough for one to place Thyagaraja on the highest pedestal of Musical artistry. This, however, is not to detract from the quality of several of his other compositions as to prove his stature in artistic excellence. One could write reams on the subject and many stalwarts and learned critics have already done so. It is needless that Sun's effulgence be glorified.

Although he left us in the last century, Thyagaraja still continues in our midst as the greatest of poets and musicians for any point of consideration. He came to us in the lineage of the great Rishis traditionally known to us. He has left behind a legacy that even the distant posterity would not fail to cherish and hold dear. His music is a wholesome pabulum and an emotional therapy to those who are distraught. Till such time the winds blow, the seas roar, days and nights repeat alternately and human life exists on the face of the earth, Thyagaraja's music lives too. It is significant in reference to Thyagaraja what the English poet spoke in such clear terms :

"Enough that there is none since risen
who sings

A song so gotten of the immediate soul,

So instant from the vital fount of things

Which is our source and goal".

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A Report

SYMPOSIUM ON MUSIC

It is not always that music performance alone be musical. That a symposium on music could as well strike a melodic note and carry the message with musical fervour was what Bombay Rasikas experienced when eminent musicologists, scholars, teachers, performing artistes and 'programme' experts met at Shanmukhananda during November, 1988 at a Symposium — presenting a series of lecture-demonstrations (the accent being more on demonstrations) on "Musical Forms : Origin, Development and Aesthetics."

As part of the Hall's Silver Jubilee Celebrations the symposium struck a new note, giving it a new definition and certainly adding a dimension to the very concept of symposium. A significant departure from the seminar-culture that is pervading all fields today was the absence of 'academic exchange of studies and views.'

The very elimination of 'paper reading', the lulling monotony of which more often than not drive the listeners miles away, gave the symposium an atmosphere of informality. This considerably reduced tension all around and made intellectual music interesting.

As the co-ordinator Shri K. S. Mahadevan rightly put it, after the Welcome address by the Sabha's Vice-President Dr. K. S. Varadhachary, the symposium was in a way a workshop of music, aimed at bringing the two aspects, 'music and musicology' closer so that our sense of appreciation is sharpened. The participants — musicians and musicologists — he said "are like perennial rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Kaveri, the stream of music flowing from them so pellucidly clear, that they try to make us understand what are the basic essentials of music and the glory of it and how it is performed and so on." The Chairperson Prof. T. R. Subramaniam made a cryptic remark saying "that part of musicology which is not musically practised is not worth pursuing."

The workshop clicked as the audience who assembled in the morning did not budge till late in the day when the last of the day's speaker started on his subject! No exaggeration that right from the Key-note address by Smt. Geetha Srinivasan, Member INTACH, the symposium proceeded on a harmonious rhythm. Her incisive address analysing scientifically and systematically the origin and evolution of music in general and that of India in particular set the right tone.

The agenda for the two days was as follows :

(1) Smt. Kalyani Sharma

:

"The Stronghold of Classical Training in Karnatak Tradition" (Swarajathi and Varnam's unique place, contributions of eminent Varnakartas).

- (2) Shri V. V. Srivatsa : "New Light on Purandara Dasa" Devarnamas & Sooladis. Demonstration by Prof. R. Vedavalli & Tirumale Sisters of Bangalore.
- (3) Shri S. R. Janakiraman : "Advent of Kritis — The Pillar of Karnatic Music".
- (4) Shri S. Rajam : "Patterns of Kritis"
- (5) Dr. B. Rajanikanta Rao : "Kshetragna Padams" — Their aesthetics & critical analysis. Demonstration by Smt. Nirmala Sundararajan.
- (6) Prof. (Smt.) R. Vedavalli : "Ragam — Tanam — Pallavi".
- (7) Shri T. S. Krishnaswami : "Training in Music : Gurukula & Institutionalized Coaching."
- (8) Smt. Sakuntala Narasimhan : "The Raga & Rasa : The Hindustani Tradition and its relevance to Karnatic Music".
- (9) Dr. K. G. Ginde : "Adaptations of Forms and Ragas in Hindustani Music".
- (10) Shri T. V. Gopalakrishnan : "Maharaja Swati Tirunal's Hindustani Compositions."

Speaking on the importance of classical training in Karnatak Tradition with emphasis on Varnams and Swarajathis, Smt. Kalyani Sharma, a Veena-cum-Vocal teacher of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya opened up new vistas of learning and practising Varnams (the forte of Karnatak tradition), the arduous yet positive way of sustaining one's voice potential and improving musical talents. Her exposition of trikala sadhaka and akaara, the Tana patterns finely embedded in Tana Varna and salient features of Swarajati made excellent illustrations for emulation by students.

With a rare 'Sooladi' rendered by Tirumale Sisters of Bangalore and select Devaranamas by Smt. R. Vedavalli of Madras, Shri V. V. Srivatsa, a scholar-cum-company executive threw new light on Purandaradasa. His was an impassioned plea for recognising the status of the Pithamaha and for restoring his Devarnamas from near extinction. Next, the erudite scholar-musician, Shri S. R. Janakiraman took the audience on a sojourn of "Kritis : The pillar of Karnatak Music". A born teacher that he is and a speaker with ready wit and humour, he endeared himself to the listeners laying bare in

simple terms and through practical demonstration what made the Kritis the Pillar of Karnatak tradition. His firm belief that the Pre-Trinity period was "a prelude to a great action" was backed by a number of "musical evidences" which he produced from Pallavi Gopala Iyer, Veerabhadrayya, Kavi Mathrubhuthayya, Pallavi Doraiswamy Iyer, to mention only a few.

Shri S. Rajam, a creative artiste who would not tamper with grammar and musical cannons still found ample use for 'plain' notes and gave a convincing demonstration in raga phrases. The accent of his demonstration was on Ragas both known and rare and songs unheard and unsung. His Gowla, Rudrapriya, Rishabhapriya and Kanthamani made an impress. Behind his scholarship and experience lie the rich impressions he had as a youngster from the Vidwans and stalwarts who had gathered at his house in Madras to sing.

Kshetrayya whose Padams have a significant place in classical music and dance was the subject of Dr. Rajanikanta Rao, retired Producer-Director, AIR, now with the Telugu University, Rajamundry, as a visiting Professor. His was a lively discourse on Kshetragna's creations bringing out the moods and emotions evoked by the poet in his padams. A scholarly exposition which was demonstrated by Smt. Nirmala Sundararajan.

Much was expected on Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi, the epitome of manodharma sangeetha from Prof. R. Vedavalli who has had training under the 'Pallavi Puli' Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer. While her emphasis was on Ta-

nam-singing which is being neglected, she gave good coverage for the alapana but the Pallavi part was somewhat hurried through, leaving out essential factors like Anuloma and Pratiloma.

Evaluating the old Gurukula and present day institutionalised coaching Violin Vidwan, T. S. Krishnaswami, a pillar of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya, highlighted the advantages and disadvantages in both the systems and observed the ways and means of moulding the institutionalised coaching in Gurukula milieu. "One word is sufficient to describe him," said KSM that is "Sangeetha Bhushanam" of those halcyon days when Sabesa Iyer and others adorned the Annamalai University. The proof of his pudding could be 'tasted' in the performance of the students he presented.

A Rasaaubhava it was that Sakuntala Narasimhan gave to the audience demonstrating on "Raga and Rasa — the Hindustani Tradition and its relevance to Karnatak Music". Her probe into the difference in emphasis in the two systems with particular reference to the place of rasa was thought-provoking.

One of the best in the symposium was Dr. K. G. Ginde's "Adaptations of Forms and Ragas in Hindustani Music". A maestro in the true sense, he enlightened the predominantly South Indian audience on Hindustani Raga Paddhati where Raga anga, swara sangathees (not sangathees in the Karnatak sense but designs reflecting raga facets and bhava) played an important role. His demonstrations of different ragas emerging from the same swara scheme, the

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treatment of Southern modes in Hindustani Paddhati and the Kalyani Varnam composed in Yaman with Sanskrit lyrics certainly opened the way to a 'Bharatiya Sangeet'. Our music, be it Hindustani or Karnatic is 'Ragadhari' music. It should therefore be not difficult to appreciate each other's music. An open mind, heart and ear are what are needed to understand and appreciate Indian music, he observed.

T. V. Gopalakrishnan's concluding session was a mini performance of Hindustani compositions of Swati Tirunal.

The whole proceedings were conducted well and with decorum by Professor T. R. Subramaniam of Delhi University. He summed up pleading for 'bringing the students nearer classical music' and encouraging them with practical tips. "There is in the country today a lot of talent among the students", he said, "but unfortunately, I feel sorry, the matching talent among the teachers is poor."

The tenor of the off-symposium discussions and audience participation generally revolved round the diminishing interest and quality of music, the ways and means of stemming the rot, the teacher's role and responsibility etc. Introducing music as a compulsory subject in schools may not be the only solution, the Chairperson observed to a Rasika's suggestion. Already the Department of Culture (Govt. of India) in its New Education Policy has a provision for allotting 10% of the teaching time in all schools to the training in fine arts. "How far they are going to effectively implement it, I don't know", he said.

Perhaps TRS struck the right chord when he emphasised that for all purposes the teacher should remain hum-

ble and be a 'seeker' (this, includes performing artistes who are also teachers). "If the teacher is a seeker, the student is sure to be inspired."

"It has been a wonderful symposium", said the President of the Sabha Dr. V. Subramanian, in his thanksgiving speech. Especially the theme, he observed, is more appropriate in the light of the Sabha running a music school also and that practical demonstrations would be of immense value to the students and others. The symposium could reach the layman too.

Above all what he liked about the symposium was the fact that for once "it has been emphasised, quite rightly, music is a great integrator." Music is in our tradition, in our culture. In our home and in our work-a-day life. Because of music mind becomes more concentrated, the load becomes lighter, he observed.

"I am particularly happy that we have had yesterday and today a sort of recrudescence or renaissance of our culture. This culture is not what South Indian or North Indian Culture is It is our Indian Culture In spite of the fact that I am a total layman, I am feeling totally overwhelmed. And in all my life, including the not so long life of politics, I don't think I have enjoyed a conference so much as today", he concluded.

The symposium made true what Voltaire had observed : "By appreciation we make excellence in others our own property." The Rasikas who listened with rapt attention, one is sure, must have had the satisfaction — "We also are artists ! The difference between us and others is that they perform it while we enjoy it."

— SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN

SOME MODERN CHALLENGES TO OUR MUSICIANS

By
SUSHEELA MISRA

Prior to Independence, Indian Classical Music led an almost apologetic existence in the royal durbars, and in the houses of the nobility. The traditional ustadhs led a sheltered existence, assured of a secure income from the princely patrons whose whims they had to cater to. Seldom would the influence of the great artistes radiate outside the palace. The masses were denied the joys of this great, ancient art.

From Durbar to Hall

The tremendous changes that have taken place in the world of music since 1947 are really remarkable in India. One of the physical changes has been the coming out of the traditional ustadhs on the public platform. Once they were the closely preserved family-heirlooms and curios of rich Nawabs and Rajas who trotted them out on ceremonial occasions in order to add to the prestige of the patrons. With the sudden cessation of courtly patronage, a large number of these professional musicians were at first left in a precarious position. Exposed to the glare of mass-publicity for the first time, and steeped in illiteracy, they were illequipped to face the modern competitive world. But gradually, they adapted themselves to the new environments and have changed for the better in many respects.

Of course, there is no dearth of orthodox "Pundits" who love to glorify

everything of the past and belittle everything of the present. And, the decline of the time-honoured "Gurukula" system has, no doubt, resulted in a dwindling in the number of musical giants of the old order. But the changed order has brought some compensations.

We have had many virtuosi of the highest order even in recent times, and what is more, they have had a wider education, and are capable of intelligent discussions on a variety of topics. Widely-travelled, and with open minds, they have built bridges of understanding between the North and the South, and between the East and the West. They are broad-minded, liberal, eclectic, and ever eager to learn from one another.

Synthesis of Gharaanas

The age of the close-fisted, one-trackminded, illiterate ustad is over. There is still a healthy rivalry among the exponents of the various "Gharaanas", but they are drawing closer to one another. Many of them are not averse to borrowing attractive features from the other. Some of the younger artistes of today have evolved interesting styles which reflect an intelligent synthesis of several "gharaanas". Even among doctors, engineers, business tycoons and executives, we come across top grade vocalists and instrumentalists.

Even as early as the dawn of this century, music used to be a forbidden fruit for persons from respected and cultured families! In the words of late Prof. D. P. Mukherji of Lucknow: "Musicians had no status, and no respectable persons would mix with them". But today, these silly social barriers have all crumbled, and the status of our musicians and dancers has soared up. No longer the lackeys of royal patrons, these musicians command the highest respect. Many of them have fantastic fan-followings. It is no longer an unusual sight to see large numbers of highly educated young men and women crowding around a much-admired musician or dancer, clamouring for his/her autographs and photographs, touching their feet, or just gazing in sheer admiration!

The Media & the Mike

The enormous growth of broadcasting, the advent of glamorous Doordarshan, the organisation of vast Music Conferences and Festivals (with the aid of the ubiquitous mike), have all brought new challenges for the artistes. The intimacy of the small initiated circle of Mehfil, so perfectly suited to the genius of our melodic system of music, is hardly available now. From having been "the most refined, aristocratic, chamber-music", our classical music has been launched into a position where it has to cater to mass-audiences with the microphone and the public address-system as the masters of the situation. The public of today are, in many respects, the most exacting patrons.

The audiences for serious music are growing larger and larger. Standards

of appreciation are also growing horizontally, as also the standards of performances, because there is keen competition among numerous Cultural Organisations who arrange Conferences and Sammelans. In today's highly competitive world, the performing artistes have to be literally on their feet all the time. They cannot afford to become smug at any stage, but have to be in constant practice and in best form all the time. The music-critic's role has become very important too.

'Virtues' to Cultivate

Such democratisation of our Shastriya Sangeet has brought many serious problems and challenges for the artistes. Instead of catering to the tastes of one or a few patrons, they now have to pander to, or pull up, the tastes of these mammoth audiences with their varied "gargantuan appetites". Mere virtuosity will no longer satisfy them. Good voice-production, aesthetic presentation, a proportionate rendering of Ragas "with a beginning, a middle, and an end", more versatility in repertoire, and infinite patience with restless audiences — these are some of the virtues that today's performing musicians have to cultivate. The musicians can no longer devote an entire night for unfolding the mood of a Raga or a couple of Ragas!

Art in New Pace of Life

The entire social set-up has been revolutionised now. Life has become hectic and is full of stresses and tensions. Some of the more popular top-musicians have so many engagements that they are 'jetting' all over the country and abroad. Aware of these new

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demands, and flung into the quick tempo of modern life, they have had to adapt themselves as well as their art to suit the new pace of life. The listeners of today hardly seem to possess the stamina, time, or inclination to sit through all-night Conferences which used to be a regular feature in many cities until some years ago. Even our traditional music has been invaded by the modern craze for speed, and our performing artistes have to pander to this craze by vertiable *duels* (instead of *duets*!) with their percussion accompanists. As the two chase each other in a frenzy of speed, the delighted audience break into rapturous applause as they feel happy they have got their money's worth!

Breaking the "Wall of Isolation"

Unfortunately, the appreciation of our listening public is still mostly instinctive. In order to build up the mood of each Raga, the artiste has to have the fullest co-operation, total receptivity and empathy from the listeners. The artiste, in the words of Pt. Ravi Shankar, "is facing hundreds of thousands of democratic gods whom he must please and appease for survival". In a vast motley audience, there are various disturbances caused by latecomers, noisy arrivals of VIPs and their coteries, and the chatter of persons who just come to socialise.

How to break down the lethargy of the mass listeners is another challenge. The wall of isolation which has so

long surrounded Indian culture can be broken through a true system of education that can create genuine and profound interest and pride in our culture and arts. One of the main hurdles before the attempts to spread a love for our classical arts is "that outlook of disparagement and contempt towards certain values of Indian tradition which some of the modern Indians have learnt from cultureless foreign colonialists". There are, in different parts of India, individuals and institutions who have for years bravely fought for the preservation of Indian classical music. This is the battle that is being fought by one of the greatest systems of music the world has ever known. One great difficulty is that technically this art is so evolved that no amount of modern education in any way qualifies someone to understand it.

In spite of all these challenges, our music is forging ahead in glory. National integration is slowly but surely being effected through the media of music and dance. Even in the materialistic world of today, we have had several "*Sangeet-Sadhaks*" who, through their utter dedication to the Art, have achieved transcendental ecstasy or what the Hindu rhetoricians call "*Savikalpa-Samaadhi*". When the audiences are attuned to the music and are in a keenly receptive mood, they too can be transported by the maestros into a higher plane of "*Rasa-aas-waadan*" or transcendental experience. Many great musicians have spoken of such experiences.

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MUSIC-ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENTS AND AESTHETICS*

By

GEETHA SRINIVASAN

Music has an universal appeal. It appeals to the Ear and the Mind, to the senses, intelligence, emotion and intellect. One cannot generalise these components, because the musical experience is not only unique and individual, it differs from listener to listener. While some are excited in a physical sense by music, to others it gives solace and serenity, while to others it is a mystic insight into the cosmic order. One of the most interesting aspects of music is listening, where one hears over and over again to certain pieces and this is where one feels the timeless quality of classical compositions. No doubt, the best form of understanding is to actually be a performer, but even simple acts like maintaining the tala makes it a personal process which one enjoys spontaneously.

Music in Time

Just as a painting exists on canvas, and architecture and sculpture are three dimensional, music exists in time. Some of you may remember the occasion when M. F. Hussain, the well known artist, painted to the strains of Pt. Bhimsen Joshi's music. It was an interesting experiment where the artist's painting reflected inner manifestation of the mind unfolded to music.

The real vitality of music lies in the interaction between rhythm and meter. Many a time when you listen to a dripping tap, you must notice a certain rhythm. The reason is truly primeval. The simple acts of breathing, walking and our own pulse rate and heart beat are based on an ancient rhythm. Fortunately for Humanity, tone deafness like colour blindness affects only a small proportion of mankind, so even if one is not a performing artist to be a Rasika is one's birthright.

Pythagoras & Musical Pitch

Musical pitch along with astronomy was one of the first natural phenomena to be studied in the ancient world. The path-breaking investigations in this field is credited to Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher and Mathematician who lived around 500 B.C. He discovered numerical facts about the sound produced by plucking instruments. He discovered that when a taut string was plucked it gave out a certain pitch, and when the string was pinched in the middle, and plucked along its $\frac{1}{2}$ string it gave a sound which was exactly one octave higher. To the ancient Greeks this was a significant discovery. It showed that the physical phenomenon was directly related to the senses (in

Keynote Address delivered at the Symposium on Music, held under the auspices of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, as part of its Hall Silver Jubilee Celebrations on November 26-27, 1988.

this case the sense of hearing), related directly to mathematical abstractions, which could be understood by reason. Pythagoras went ahead and proposed the hypothesis, that all nature was governed by number.

In the Middle Ages, Pythagoras's experiments formed the basis of the University curriculum. Perhaps, there is something in the popular view that music and mathematical talents go together. Till the 16th century, it was not known how sound was exactly produced: that it resulted from small but very rapid vibrations that are set up in certain bodies, or objects, in taut strings, plates, gongs, bells and columns of air, enclosed in tubes of one kind or the other, and that one complete vibration made a cycle.

While these discoveries may have been of great earth-shaking value in the West, to us in India, it was nothing new. With the chanting of the Omkaras we understood the concentric occult vibrations that emanate from the soul and long before the Western world was even remotely civilized we had already discovered the Veena, a string instrument with its sublime vibrations and the Srichakra with its *Bindu* and in our discovery of the Saptaswaras developed one of the most amazing musical systems of the world, where one could be one with the universe yet be alone.

Indian Music — Impersonal

As Ananda Coomaraswamy wrote, this Indian music is essentially impersonal. It reflects an emotion and an experience which are deeper and wider and older than the emotion or wisdom of any single individual. It is sorrow

without tears, it is joy without exultation and is passionate without any loss of serenity. It is in the deepest sense of words all human. But when the Indian prophet speaks of inspiration, it is to say that the Vedas are eternal, all that the poet achieves by his devotion is to hear or see, it is then, Saraswati, the Goddess of speech and learning or Narada whose mission it is to disseminate occult knowledge in the strings of his Veena or Krishna whose flute is forever calling us to leave the duties of the world and follow him — it is these, rather than any human individual, which speak through the singer's voice and are seen in the movements of the dancer.

Elevating & Sublime

There are many ways of realising the Supreme Godhead, but none so elevating and sublime as Indian Classical Music which is the highest form of Nada Brahma. The importance of music in the Hindu form of worship, is symbolised by the Trinity, where Shiva is associated with the Damaru, Krishna an avatar of Vishnu by the flute, and Saraswati, the consort of Brahma carries the sacred Veena.

Nature's Symphony

Whether it is the incessant hooting of horns, the roar of the pneumatic drill, loud film music, or school children screaming during recess hours, sound permeates the atmosphere, especially in big cities like Bombay. In the countryside one listens to gurgling streams, the chirping of song birds, the rustle of dried leaves and the distant rumble of thunder. Primitive man listening to these sounds must have no doubt realised that his tongue being more articu-

late than animals and birds, could reproduce many of these noises. The sound of his feet stomping on the ground or the branch of a tree beating against a dried animal skin, might have been the beginning of rhythm or the invention of a rudimentary drum.

Apart from this, he might have observed Nature's symphony in the change of seasons, and the ancient honkings of migratory birds as they flew overhead might have brought out evocative stirrings of a creativity, which longed to find expression in some form or the other. Long before dialects and languages or the written script, it must have no doubt been some form of primitive dance and music, which triggered the process of civilization.

Origin — To Divinity

In all ancient cave paintings or sculptures, apart from hunting scenes, the most commonly portrayed ones are of dance and musical instruments. Whether it was the Hrar in Ethiopia, which was the precursor of the harp or rudimentary wind instruments and drums, civilization's march forward has been inexorably linked with the stirrings of an ancient cosmic rhythm.

The origins of Indian music go back in antiquity, and it is difficult to pinpoint the exact source. According to ancient lore, Lord Brahma taught it to Shiva, who in turn imparted the knowledge to Goddess Saraswati, who is Veena Pustaka Dharini. The earliest chants of Aryan settlers on this subcontinent were the Archaka chants of the Rig Veda, based on a single note. In the Sama Veda were the three types, the Undatta, Anudatta and Svarita,

which when sung at a higher pitch completed the octave. This was the most important development in the history of music. The Rigvedic instruments were the Veena, Damaru and the flute, while the Saptaswaras are referred to in the Mahabharata, and in the Ramayana, Ravana is mentioned as a great Vainika. In the Mahabharata Krishna's conch is Panchajanya, while Arjuna's is called Devadatta. These various legends on Indian music and its origins have one thing in common — that its inspiration went back to a higher Divinity.

Around the 4th or 5th century A.D., Bharata wrote his *Natya Shastra*, whose study is necessary for all sincere aspirants of music and dance. By this time the octaves had been given its seven names, the Shadja, Rishaba, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nishada, forming the glorious Saptaswaras, the fountainhead of our music.

The Muslim Contribution

By the time the Muslims entered India around the 11th or 12th century, Indian music had developed into its distinct North Indian and South Indian systems. It is to the credit of the Muslim rulers that instead of destroying the system they adapted it and added their own Arabic and Persian touches. While Jayadeva had composed his *Ash-tapadis* in Sanskrit, songs were sung in Braja Bhasa, the local dialect and developed into the Dhrupad style. In any mention of the development of Classical Fine Arts on this subcontinent, one must not forget to mention the royal patronage given to it at all times which was largely responsible for preserving this ancient heritage.

In the court of Allaudin Khilji in the 12th century, Amir Khushro invented not only the Sitar, but also introduced many new melodic systems in the North Indian pattern, which further developed into the Khayal with its romantic format. This is the most popular system which is in use today. While Tansen was one of the gems of Emperor Akbar's court, the royal house of Gwalior gave patronage in immense measure to aspiring singers.

Music in Paintings

An important development in the North was also the miniature paintings of the Rajasthani and Pahari schools where depiction of Ragas along with their companions, the Raginis, found expression. The Ragini Todi in a garden playing on her Veena, with a deer as a companion is one of the well-known paintings of these schools.

Around the 13th century, Sarangadeva, a Kashmiri Pandit who fled the Muslim invasion in the North, settled down in the South at the court of the Yadava Kings, and composed the monumental treatise the *Sangeeta Ratnakara*. This deals not only with the North and South Indian systems, but also with musical instruments, Ragas, Talas etc., and is considered one of the first major works on Indian music.

While the North Indian system based largely on the aesthetics of music, developed in its own unique manner, the Karnatic system remained as it had been for centuries. The songs of the great composers were not only full of melody, but also rich in Sahitya, which were full of vedantic teachings. The ancient Tamil text, *Silappadikaram*,

mentions the Yazh an ancient form of the Veena, while the Thevarams and Prabandams of the Saivite and Vaishnavite saints will be revered for all times. The Bhakti movement propagated by the great preceptor Sri Ramanujacharya spread all over the country, and in the North blended with Sufism to produce great compositions. It cut across all man-made barriers and produced saints like Kabir, Mirabai, Surdas, Nanak etc., who with their simple lyrics promoted music through the countryside.

When one mentions Karnatic Music, one has to mention Saint Purandaradasa, a Haridasa, who is the father of this system. He made the Mayamalavagaula Raga the standard for teaching aspiring students. To him goes the credit of developing Jantai Varisai, Alankaras and small Geetas to imbibe a love of music in the learners. His compositions were prodigious and his Devaranamas are a must for all students of Karnatic Music.

Trinity of Music

Syama Sastri, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Tyagaraja, each a veritable giant in the field of Music form the Trinity who were not only contemporaries, but were also natives of Tiruvarur in Tanjore District. Syama Sastri was born in mid-18th century and as was the custom in those days was taught Sanskrit and Telugu. Though the plans were to make him a priest, he came under the influence of a Sanyasi who, understanding his great talents, gave him rigorous training. After this he associated himself with Adivappayya, a court

musician, who polished his talent. Apart from being a scholar, and a composer, he was a Sri Vidya upasaka and a great devotee of Sri Kamakshi Amman. His intricate talas have made his music more difficult to learn, and his mudra at the end of his compositions was always "Syama Krishna". According to legend he kept company with many scholars and musicians, amongst them being Thyagaraja whom he would meet often in Tiruvayyaru.

Muthuswami Dikshitar was born in 1775. Legend has it that his father Ramaswami was a musician of great repute attached to the royal houses. He was childless for a long time, and observing tantric rituals he prayed to Goddess Balambika who came to him in a dream, and gave him a string of pearls. Soon afterwards Muthukumaraswami was born to his wife Subbammal.

Coming from a distinguished lineage which followed the traditions of Venkatakshi, the great musicologist of the 15th — 16th century, the turning point in the life of the budding musician came when he met Chidambaranatha Yogi, who took the young boy with him to Kashi. There Muthuswami Dikshitar lived for about six years and mastered the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar and literature. This made each one of his compositions like the Navavarana and Navagraha kritis, rich in Tantric Yoga, and Mahamantras. An important development at this time was his exposure to North Indian Music which accounts for his compositions in ragas like Brindavana Sarang and Amir Kalyani.

Soon after he returned from Kashi, he wandered through temple towns like

Tirutani, Kalahasti and Kancheepuram and developed his mudra, "Guru Guha." Along with his father he listened to Western Music Bands, and though Dikshitar was a Vainika, one of his disciples mastered the violin and adapted it to Karnatic Music. His *Tyagaraja Yoga Vaibhavam* in Ananda Bhairavi, is a masterpiece of literary composition, where words can be split without losing their significance. Like the other saints of the Trinity, Dikshitar shunned all material wealth and his tantric learning and music were the prevailing forces in his life. Though not prodigious in his compositions, he can be compared to the great Western composer Bach, with his majestic organ music which resounds through cathedrals even today.

Tyagabrahmam

The life of Saint Tyagaraja is the great miracle in Karnatic Music and one cannot imagine the South Indian music scene without his divine compositions. Like Syama Sastri's family his ancestors migrated to South with the fall of the Vijayanagar Empire, where Maratta kings of Tanjore offered a benign refuge. Saint Tyagaraja was born in Tiruvarur around 1760. His father Ramabrahmam was a poet attached to the royal court. The family later shifted to Tiruvayyaru where they were gifted some land, and it was on the banks of the sacred river Kavery that his genius flowered. Like all scholars of those days he was well versed both in Telugu and Sanskrit. His Pancharatna Kritis are a tribute to his musical genius and his compositions which resound with lyrical quality, simplicity and devotion are the most perfect to be found anywhere in the world. To him Music could not be

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separated from Bhakti, a yearning of the Jivatma to have a glimpse of the Infinite. His Ishta Devatha was Lord Rama, and not a moment passed when he did not meditate on His Lotus Feet. Saint Tyagaraja lived the life of a mendicant, and he consumed only food given by way of alms everyday.

He spurned all royal patronage, and is supposed to have sung his composition in Kalyani *Nidhi Chala Sukhama* to commemorate the event. In the Kriti he inquires of his mind whether wealth is more important than the darshan of the Lord. Without the intricate talas of Syama Sastri, and the complex Sanskrit terminologies of Muthuswami Dikshitar Saint Tyagaraja, like all savants before him, spoke to the Antharyami with simplicity and beauty, singing hometruths which have truly stood the test of time.

I remember, many years ago my grandmother used to tell me that while Dikshitar's compositions were like a coconut where one had to break the shell to get at the milk, Syama Sastry's music was akin to peeling a plantain, while Saint Tyagaraja's was like a sweet grape which dissolved in the mouth instantly.

A disciple of Sonti Venkataramanaya, one of the foremost singers of his day, Tyagabrahmam took sanyasa towards the end of his life and attained Samadhi on 6th January, 1847. The greatest tribute paid to this great Avatar, is the Tyagaraja Aradhana, which takes place at Tiruvayyaru every year in January.

While the name of the Trinity is commonly mentioned in connection

with Indian Music, there were many luminaries like Annamacharya, Kshet-ragna with his padams, and Maharaja Swati Tirunal who have enriched this rich mosaic. Like Hindustani music the South Indian system also thrived on royal patronage. In the North musical scholars like Professor Bhatkande and Pandit Vishnu Digamber Paluskar institutionalized music, and went deeply into the academics. They held regular seminars of eminent musicologists and were able to persuade the elite who tended to look down on all Classical Fine Arts, that it was an ancient heritage to be cherished and protected.

In the South Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale did a yeoman service in establishing Kalakshetra, where not only Bharata Natyam, but also Karnatic Music was given its rightful place. A great Vainika like Sri Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer and an erudite musician like Sri M. D. Ramanathan thrived in her Institution. While giants like Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer still stride the Karnatic Music scene like a colossus, one must not forget to mention the contribution made by Smt. M. S. Sub-balakshmi, the nightingale of the South, who with her melodic rendering of Hindi Bhajans has integrated the music of the North and the South. An important development on the scene has been the Jugalbandhis, which provide a concert platform for eminent musicians from the North and the South, not only to be competitive, but also complementary.

Indian Music is basically melodic in form. In the given framework of Arohanam and Avarohanam, the Raga takes its format. Every raga has its own gamakas and delineations and

since the rendering of this is highly individualistic, no two musicians may render the same raga in a similar manner. While the Southern system uses the 72 Melakartas, in the North Indian system only a limited number are used. Set to rhythmic patterns or talas the artist takes one on a journey, through the rich imageries of his mind. The most commonly used talas are the Adi, Roopaka, Jampa and Chapu Talas. While Karnatic programmes start with a good Varnam which sets the pace, the North Indian system starts with the Vilambit and builds upto a crescendo. The Tabla and the Mridangam along with the Violin, have become an indispensable part of concert halls over the country, and the Tani Avartanams of the percussion instruments are as eagerly awaited as the main concert.

On to the Far East

Instruments like Nagaswaram have become a part of temple worship and grace all auspicious occasions in the South. The influence of Indian Music and Instruments have over the centuries spread to the Far East and South East Asia. Starting from the humble Ektar used by folk musicians to sophisticated performances on the concert stages, the Music of this country has been the invisible thread which has bound this great civilization together. The value of Nada Brahma in the Hindu way of life has always been recognised. In the old days, wood for making a veena, was, if possible, always procured from a tree growing near a temple. The theory being that the ringing of temple bells and the Vedic chants would be absorbed by the wood, making the instrument more melodious. In recent years, it has been scientifically proved, that the child in the mother's womb responds to soothing music,

which may explain the reason why child prodigies are born in musical homes.

Points to Ponder

The renewed interest in the classical Arts is seen in the Dance and Music schools, which have mushroomed all over the country, especially in big cities like Bombay. Along with these classes, if theory along with evolution of Art and History is taught, the young minds will be more receptive. Music Institutions should also build up a good reference library, and stock cassettes and records of great maestros, and time should be set apart at least once a week, where students would learn to be disciplined listeners — an aspect which is sadly lacking in concert halls today.

Instead of training students only to procure diplomas, greater emphasis should be placed on the Guru-Shishya relationship, where quality is not sacrificed for quantity. When Sri Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar went to the great Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar to learn music, he told him to come back to him after he had mastered Telugu and Sanskrit. The great teachers of yore understood that pronouncing the words properly, and above all following their deeper significance enhanced the understanding of classical music. It would be worthwhile, if music institutions devoted some time to this aspect.

In spite of the pressure of their school and college curriculums, it is indeed heartening that young people, once again wishing to rediscover their roots, are going back to their classical traditions. This is where Fine Arts Societies and music schools can play a leading role in imparting our values and awakening interests in Indian Music, our Divine Heritage.

TRAINING IN MUSIC : GURUKULA & INSTITUTIONAL COACHING*

By

T. S. KRISHNASWAMI

In the long history of the world, we find that Music has played an important part in the cultural, social and religious lives of all nations. There has been a slow and gradual evolution of the ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC through the centuries. In our country we can say that the teaching and learning of Music started with the four Vedas, which are recited in 3, 4 or 7 notes.

Maathru Devo Bhava Pithru Devo Bhava
Saa Ri Saanee Sasa Saari Saanee Sasa
Acharya Devo Bhava
Saasaa Ri Saanee Sa Sa

In this hymn from the *Taithiriyopani-shad* of the Yajur Veda, the three swaras NI SA RI are used. In some hymns, four swaras, RI SA NI PA are used. In the recitation of the Sama Veda, seven swaras are used and they are of the Kharaharapriya raga, MA GA RI SA NI DHA PA. It is noteworthy that in the teaching and learning of the Vedas, both Gurukula and institutional teaching methods have been in practice.

In the teaching and learning of Music also, both Gurukula and Institutional methods have been followed by many composers and musicians. Sadguru Sri Thyaga Brahman is a shining example of a Saint composer, yogi, philosopher, musician, Bhakta and above all a Tea-

cher par excellence, all combined in one. He had many disciples, coming from different places and having varying degrees of musical talent and capacity and all of them had the rare and unique opportunity of learning their Guru's inspired keerthanas under the spell of a Devotional Atmosphere which was a synthesis of Gurukula and institutional teaching. We can drink the nectar of Karma yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana yoga, Advaita and in fact, the entire Indian philosophical thought, from Sadguru Thyaga Brahman's keerthana, which have a universal appeal. Thyaga Brahman showed how Music should become the vehicle for Bhakti leading to a sublime and Godly life.

Fundamental Exercises

Sangeetha Pithamaha Sri Purandara Dasa set the method of practice in classical music by organizing the fundamental exercises like Swaravalis, Janta Varisas, Hechusthayi (Higher Octave) Varisas, Datu Varisas, Sapta Tala Alankaras and Gitas. The fundamental exercises are to be practised in Swaras as well as Akaras in three kalas (speeds). They should be followed by the practice of Gitas and Varnas with their Swaras and Sahityas in two kalas (speeds). When the student of music achieves the correct method of singing or playing Varnas a significant standard of Swarajana, Ragajana and La-

*Paper presented at the Symposium on Music.

yajnana is developed, which will greatly help in understanding and learning the Keerthanas in all their different aspects like Raghabhava, Gamaka-bhava, Sahithyabhava, Swara-shuddha and Laya-shuddha.

Aptitude for Research

While learning music from the Guru, the student should practise diligently and regularly, cultivate the ability to enjoy the music learnt and have a researching mind and aptitude to rectify and avoid possible mistakes in Swara usage, Raga development and Sahitya content. To expect these qualities in the student, it is necessary that the Guru should have them in full measure and guide the student in all these aspects. For instance, in Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar's Arabhi Raga Kriti "Shri Saraswati namostute, Para Devate, Shri-pati Gauripati Guru Guha vinute, Vidhiyuvate", the insertion and singing of the word, "Varade" cannot evidently be that of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar, a great composer, poet and scholar, well-versed in all aspects of composing Kritis. When *te* is the ending letter in the words *namostute*, *devate*, *vinute* and *vidhiyuvate*, the ending letter in the word 'varade' is *de* which is both discordant and incongruent and the word itself reduces the duration of the tala by one full avarta.

Beauty & Rhyme

Similarly, in the Tamil kriti, *Kalaittookki Ninradum Deivame yennai kai tookkiyal Deivame*, a composition by the eminent scholar poet, Sri Marimutha Pillai, there is a Charanam : *Nandi mattalam tookka/Naradar yazh tookka/tom tom yenrayan talam/shrutiyodu tooka.*

Those favouring the use of pure Tamil singing as *surutiyodu tooka/sindai mahizh-ndu vanor sennimel Karam tooka/mundum valiyudaiya muyalahan unnaittookka/Kalaittookki ninradum Deivame yennai kaitookkiyal Deivame.*

In this Charanam, in the place of *Nandi mattalam tookka*, I have heard some people singing, *Nandi mattalam kotta*. Many of you might have heard some people saying, "katcheriyile mattalam nanna kottinar". Most probably, this popular usage has entered this Charanam in this kriti and displaced the original word "tookka". The composer has used the words "tookka" and "tookki" in an admirable way in different places with different meanings, bringing out the beauty of the Tamil language.

Speaking about the researching mind, Saint Thyaga Brahmam again shows the way. In the Keerthana *Maa Jaanaki Chetta battaga* in Kamboji raga, Thyaga Brahmam has given out, more than 150 years ago, the fact in Ramayana that the real Sita was in the safe custody of the God of Fire while the shadow or the illusory form of Sita was taken by Ravana to Lanka and kept under the Ashoka tree. (This fact was brought out recently in the T.V. serial of Ramayana).

Learning sans Syllabus

In the Gurukula system, there is no syllabus, no fixed time-table, for learning and practising and no time-limit in which a student can be expected to have the high standard desirable in Raga, Kriti, Niraval and Manodharma swara and a capacity for development of originality and individuality. It off-

ers the student an opportunity to spend most of the time with the Guru, patiently wait for those occasions which present themselves for learning, practising and listening to the music of the Guru and try to develop originality and style of presentation. In the Gurukula method, people take it for granted that one is sure to achieve high standard.

In modern institutional teaching, on the other hand, there is a given syllabus, a fixed time-table for teaching and learning, a time-limit in which the student is expected to learn and develop a certain high standard in Music. In group-learning, there is the advantage of a competitive atmosphere, a comparative study of individuals and the creation of an incentive and enthusiasm. Nevertheless, there is the greatest disadvantage of compulsorily grouping together of those with musical talent and background and those with no musical sense or aptitude, thus placing the Guru under the most arduous and trying test of his life and bringing out his sense of dedication, patience, perseverance, understanding, sympathy, capability and discipline.

Streamlined Coaching

The teacher has to prove by action that a high standard in Music can be produced in institutional coaching also and thereby convince people. The teacher has to keep a watch over the students' individual receptivity, grasp and capacity to reproduce and correct them then and there. It is necessary to teach a song and revise it continuously for about six months so that the students get it in their blood streams.

Vocal training is a prerequisite for instrumentalists.

In modern institutions of music teaching, the teacher will find it very useful and effective to use catchwords like 'picnic-spot' and 'paying guest' to illustrate the position and power of Shadjam and Panchamam among the seven notes as 'picnic-spots' and Gandhara and Nishada of Arabi Raga as 'paying guests' to create interest in students and motivate them into the mysteries and munificence of Music.

In the development of a raga, a student of music should know important details like Janaka (Melakarta), Janya (derivative), Arohana (ascending swaras), Avarohana (descending swaras), Shadava (six notes), Audava (five notes), Alpatva (a note sparingly used with a slight or passing touch, which cannot be the beginning or ending note of a raga sanchara or musical phrase), Bahutva (notes frequently used) Graha (beginning note of a musical phrase), Amsa (Raga chhaya swaras or swaras which bring out the melodic entity or swarupa of the Raga), Nyasa (ending note of a musical phrase), and Gamaka (shake or the manipulation of a note in a manner resulting in a musical effect).

An important and unique feature about Gamaka is that the same swara in a Raga may take different forms while singing or playing. For example, *Nadopasana che Shankaranarayana Vidulu*. The student should learn these practically from the Guru and should also listen to the music of eminent musicians for the proper development of musical standard and capacity.

THE SABHA LOOKS BACK.....

SHANMUKHANANDA, a symbol of national integration in the cultural sphere, and which stands tall and proud, had a look back (25 years ago) traversing Down Memory Lane through a photo feature last October. From the days when the Sabha had no roof over its head or space to claim its own to the present, the saga of fluctuating fortunes, hopes and fears, toil and triumph came alive in the story the pictures unfolded.

Down Memory Lane through 40 panels was after all an experience, to many a memorable memento, where they saw themselves young and jubilant either as an energetic office-bearer or an enthusiastic volunteer, a promoting patron or a performing artiste, a proud prize-winner or an ever-responsive Rasika. The story the pictures told had a theme, each panel unfolding a chapter from its history, with crisp captions. If the "Stars in the sky watched the stars on the stage performing" during the pandal days, the "Sa Pa Sa of Shanmukhanda" laid the foundation of the Hall extending to its Grahapravesham with the Sangeeta Ratnakara Ariyakudi and the queen of melody M. S. regaling the audience with their melodious music.

With Lord "Shanmukha of Shanmukhananda" enshrined in His sanctum sanctorum, the panels went on to display the "Eminent personalities at the altar of fine arts", with eminent musicians with their 24-carat creations ... coming, singing, and conquering, oblig-

ing the rasikas with Sriranjani, Sindhu Bhairavi, Mohanam, etc., as requested. The instrumentalists had their own magical twangs and vibrant strums to the accompaniment of heady beats ... What a celestial experience !

The doyens who are no more had entered Shanmukhananda's Hall of Fame (in Portrait) ever blessing their scions of carrying on the tradition.

"Sangeet Ishwar hai, aur Kalakar uska Pujari" — so were depicted the Hindusthani maestros in their varied Gharanas and gayakis.

Shanmukhananda did not rest with providing a feast for the ears. There was feast for eyes too, the dancing feats and emotive bhavas frozen in picturesque 'frieze' in styles as varied as Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Mohini Attam, Manipuri etc.

Drama was not left behind. Quite a collection was displayed reminiscing the mythologicals, socials, politicals, musicals, mysteries, comedies, and tragedies the Hall has witnessed.

If the Aradhana at the Mini cast a devotional spell, the Shanmukhananda's way of saying "We are proud of you" must have delighted many a prize-winner at the music competitions the Sabha holds year after year. ... "And the show goes on, God willing the curtain will never come down".

"No doubt, the pictorial took the industrialist-philanthropist-thinker Shri

N. K. Somani, who inaugurated the exhibition "down memory lane truly" and he was "sure that the Sabha will continue itself with lustre and glory". To journalist Shri N. Hariharan the exhibition brought "alive memories of the past decades and portrays the growth of the Sabha and its activities. For those who have witnessed these cultural events they evoke the joys of those days." "Excellence in perfection depicting the History is something worth cherishing", remarked a visitor from Madras.

Classical & Loka Ruchi

September fare of the visual art, the dance, had three celebrities, Sobha Naidu, Hema Malini and Sanjukta Panigrahi, giving their respective styles their individual stamp. A dancer of fine finish and subtle evocation, Sobha chose to go loka-dharmi and made an entire suite of drama of her Kuchipudi numbers — "Vineela Veni" (Begada), from Adyatma Ramayana, "Govardhana Giridhari", a Tarangam and "Vani pondu" a Javali and Dasavathara.

The stunning beauty of Hema Malini held sway on stage and she managed with her histrionics. The selections like Sooladi, Shiva Leela, Annamacharya's "Muddugare Yasodha" had great scope in Bharata Natyam but the technique was taxing for her even with simple choreography and repetitive adavus.

It was Odissi that stole the limelight — A class performance by the Panigrahi couple, which was a feast for eyes and ears. The fare — Kirvani Pallavi, Ashtapadi ("Rase Harimiha") and Ardhanareeswara Sthotra — all had a touch of class with fluidity of expres-

sion, grace and vitality. Perhaps the only number catering to 'loka ruchi' was Yugma Dwanda, the laya-proned competition between the wings and the dancer.

It was loka ruchi all the way with Radha — Raja Reddy in Kuchipudi during the October feast. The other two featured were Shiv Kumar Sharma (Santoor), and Parween Sultana. The Santoor Samrat played most familiar melodies to the predominantly South-Indian audience — Yaman and Kedar. His command over the 100-odd stringed instrument was phenomenal. It just sang to his tunes. At times he just skated through the board without a single beat, yet produced beautiful designs.

Parween cast a spell with her Madhuvanti. Her vocal power, its mellifluity, felicity over the range, malleability to manoeuvre any twist or twirl without maligning classicality and above all the "saukhyā" bhava she evoked in rasikas lingered long. Her jugalbandi with her husband Dilshad Khan was really a jugalbandi blending the voice, vidwat and improvisation. Their Hansdhvani and Bhairavi made an impact.

Rhapsody in Philately

The month of November wore a carnival look as it represented varied subjects of fine arts, though a chunk was reserved for Drama and Symposium on Music. "Music on Stamps", a philatelic exhibition put up by Smt. Subhalakshmi Subramaniam added a new dimension to the Sabha's celebrations. Tiny, undoubtedly, the collections had music in them and 'performed an expansive Niraval on musical

information.' For, as Subhalakshmi believes the 'tiny' stamps have a mighty perspective of education besides serving the purpose of communication. Their 'function' extends much beyond postal links and communication. They serve as a 'window of world knowledge'. They convey a message too.

With some biographical sketches, pertinent quotes, hymns and musical message, witty quips too, at times a picture, a painting or a photograph added to the stamps, Subhalakshmi composed a rhapsody in philately. The quotations break the monotony of sight and vision and make for an intellectual feast, she says. To her stamps open up a vast vista of education — not of composers, artistes or their art, musical climes or styles alone, but of whole musical genres, systems and their evolutions. "I thought the stars were the only thing. Now I know Stamps on Music beat my conjecture" said Dr. Venkatavaradan, Director, Nehru Planetarium, inaugurating the exhibition.

CHO's hilarious social satires, "Sambhavami Yuge Yuge", "Nermai Urangum Neram" and "Yarukkum Vetkamillai" were still hits among the Bombay audience despite their repeated staging for some years now. Poignance laced through the humorous social plays Poornam (Viswanathan) New Theater staged, "Adimaigal", "Anbulla Appa" & "Vaasal" and "Kadavul Vandirundar" moved the audience.

Music charged with Bhakti

Nedunuri Krishnamoorthy's concert touched a new high, finely blending musical vision and rendition with classical vitality and evocative depth. His

Poorvi Kalyani, Kirvani and Saveri were portrayals of imagination and aesthetics. Using the Sahitya in their right feel 'he made music especially the Niraval a vehicle of bhakti.

Young Ramesh (Mridangam) playing with restraint and reticence earned many a Sabhash from the veteran. Kandadevi Alagiriswamy with many concert innings to his credit wielded the bow.

Again it was the spirit of bhakti, a melodious devotion, with musical depth and performing zest that characterised the Vocal recital of Sakuntala Narasimhan who opened the December fare by Bombay-based celebrities. Her Riti-gowla, Simhendramadhyamam and Gamanasrama, an odd choice for a Pallavi though, were essays of musical excellence. Accompanying her were Kalyani Shankar (Violin), T. S. Nandakumar (Mridangam) and Thyagarajan (Ghatam).

The Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped have more than rehabilitated the 50-odd children. They have made artistes out of them helping them to dance away their handicaps. With danseuse Jayashree Nair as their guide, teacher, choreographer and conductor, the handicapped's Ramayana ballet has become a hit in Bombay. Its presentation at the Sabha revealed how attuned they were to their roles. They had almost identified themselves with their respective casts. They deserve to be presented all over the country and abroad to propagate the therapeutic value of the arts.

Popularity of mythologicals and religious plays never fades. Little wonder that Kalanilayam's (Bombay) "Adi

Sankarar" had an impact on the audience.

were by Kalyani Sharma of the Vidyalaya.

It was the first time that the Hall patronised its own Vidyalaya 'products'. The promise and prowess of the students were encouraging. The Karnatic orchestra, comprising Vocal, Veena, Violin and Mridangam set the classical tone and tenor of the fare that was to follow. The production and direction

In Kasturi Rangan one saw a budding musician, and Ranjani-Gayathri sisters impressed as a fine violin duo. Besides the veena pair, Suman and Gomathi, the presentation included a 15-member Sitar ensemble produced by Pt. Kartik Kumar of the Vidyalaya.

SR

OBITUARY

T. B. Narasimhachar

We regret to record the death of the veteran music critic and chief architect of the venerable Malleswaram Sangitha Sabha, Shri T. B. Narasimhachar, at Bangalore on 23rd November 1988. Under the pen-name "Saragrahi", his contributions to many newspapers and Journals on matters connected with music and dance were immense. The fact that he was the Karnataka correspondent for SHANMUKHA from 1975 and took his duties with relish and seriousness is probably only a small feather in his cap. TBN, who was 74 when he died, belonged to a generation of Sabha organisers and music critics, who were in close touch with the giants like Bidaram Krishnappa Veena Seshanna, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu etc., and benefited musically from the contacts with those heroes. Even recently, TBN published articles in "The Hindu" of Madras on Bidaram Krishnappa, Balakavadi Srinivasa Iyengar etc. His interviews with Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer on wide-ranging aspects of Carnatic Music were published on two occasions in the Bangalore English newspapers. His compilation on the bio-data of Karnataka artistes drew praise from the State Government. Sangita Nritya Academy felicitated him in 1985 as "Karnataka Kala Tilaka". An extremely modest and unsophisticated person (he was used to plain speaking) TBN's 50 years of service to South Indian Music & Dance cannot be adequately measured. He could write with depth and felicity both in English and Kannada. His passing away is a big loss to the world of journalism particularly to SHANMUKHA which he served with loyalty and enthusiasm.

K. S. M.

THE STRONGHOLD OF TRAINING IN KARNATIC TRADITION*

(THE UNIQUE PLACE OF VARNAM & SWARAJATI)

By
KALYANI SHARMA

In our country, the origin of music, like all Shastras, is attributed to the divine source. The Vedas, Shastras, Sruti, Smruti, Itihasa and the Puranas all praise the origin and the nobility of our music. There are many beliefs about the origin of music. One is that the universe (Prapancham) has come from the Parabrahma which is the Aumkara Swaram. Aumkaram can be split as A-karam, U-karam, and M-akaram. A-karam personifies Vishnu. U-karam stands for Brahma and M-akaram for Rudra (Shiva).

Variations on Origin

Another belief is that Music has originated from the Panchamukhas of Lord Shiva, viz., Satyojatam, Aghoram, Tatpusham, Isanam and Vamadevam. This is referred to, by Saint Thyagaraja in the Charanam of Kriti *Nada Tanumanisam* in Chitaranjani raga — *Satyojatati Pancha Vaktraja — Sari Gama Pada Ni Vara Sapta Swara*.

Yet another attributes it to the Devas who evolved music to sing the praise of the Lord and that Saint Narada brought this to the earth.

There are two opinions as to whether music was evolved before or after the Vedic period. The chanting of Vedas

in a musical note enhances its beauty and also heightens our involvement.

Oldest of the Vedas is Rigveda — between 4500 BC to 2500 BC. In the olden days, Vedas were sung in three swaras — viz., Dada, Udada, and Swaritam. In the Rig Vedic period itself one more swara seems to have been added.

Sama samhida period : — BC 2500 to 1400. It is also known as Upanishad period. During this period more swaras were added and brought to seven and Sama Veda was chanted accordingly.

Aranya period : BC 1400 to 500. During this period these seven swaras were grouped to make one "sthayee" (octave). Two additional sthayees (Tara and Mandra) were evolved and added one before, and one after the existing sthayees. Subsequently the in between swaras were also evolved and added between the long gaps of the Sapta swaras to complete the full range.

Later on, many sahitya granthas were written. Bharata Muni's (200 — 400 AD) *Natya Shastra* is the first "Sangeeta grantha". This was followed by *Sangeetha Ratnakara* by Sarangadeva and

Swara Mela Kalanidhi by Ramamatya and others. The combined literature of these granthas helped the growth of music. Mention should be made here for the invaluable contribution Tamil literature has made towards the growth of music. *Silappadikaram* by Ilangovaligal, *Tiruvallankattu Mootha Thirupathikangal* by Karaikal Ammayar and *Thevara Thirupathikangal* by Thirugnana Sambhandar, Tirunavukkarasu, and Sundaramurthikal, *Divya Prabandha Pasurams* of Alwars, Arunagirinathar's *Tiruppugazh* and *Tiruvilai Pa-malaikal* by Thirumaligai Thevarkal.

These were rendered in temples musically as an invocation to God.

Royal Patronage

Thus music spread among the people steadily, step by step. Eminent composers and Saints like Purandara-dasa and Trinity brought about the transformation of music to its present stature. Later musicians were able to successfully propagate music due to the high patronage they received then at the courts of the monarchs of Tanjore, Mysore, Ettayapuram, Travancore etc.

The constant and tireless endeavour of all these great composers made music highly systematised making it easy for the present generation to learn fluently with ease.

The elementary lessons in music provided by Sangeetha Pitamaha Sri Purandaradasa has come to be the rare infrastructure for the edifice of music. Traditionally, we begin with Saralivarisai, and proceed to Janta Varisai, Thattu varisai, Mel Sthayee Varisai, Alankaram and Geetam. All the

Varisais and Alankarams are practised in three speeds (both in the Swara and Akara).

Graded Lessons

Alankaram has an important place in the training of Karnatic music. Traditionally there are seven Alankarams set to 7 talas :

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| (1) Druvatala | (14 Aksharas) |
| (2) Matya tala | (10 Aksharas) |
| (3) Roopaka tala | (6 Aksharas) |
| (4) Jampa tala | (10 Aksharas) |
| (5) Triputa tala | (7 Aksharas) |
| (6) Kanda Jati Ata tala | (14 Aksharas) |
| (7) Eka tala | (4 Aksharas) |

Initial training is imparted in Raga Mayamalavagaula. Similarly, the same mode of practice should be undertaken in Sampurna gana ragas like Kalyani, Todi, Shankarabharanam, Kharaharapriya, Pantuvarali and others. If completed, one can make a positive step towards achieving Swara gnana, laya Shuddha and Raga gnana. It equips the aspirant to approach Varnam with Raga bhava and Gamaka.

Geethams : They beckon Sahitya in Karnatic training, after the Swaravarisais. The Swara-sahityas are very simple and clear in Geethams and they are set in a variety of Talas. There are two types of Geethams. "Stuthi Geethams" and "Lakshna Geethams".

Stuthi Geethams are with lyrics short and in praise of God. Lakshna Geethams are more elaborate and the Sahitya contains the lakshna of the respective raga.

*Paper presented at the Symposium on Music with a liberal sprinkling of demonstrations.

Swarajathi : It is sung in Swara, Sahitya and "Jathi" combinations. The speed of the tala remains constant although swaras are in three kalas, namely Chowka (slow), Madhyama (medium) and Dhurita (fast).

Swarajathis such as *Rara Venu Gopala* in Bilahari, *Sambasivayanave* in Khamas and *Rave me maguva* in Ananda Bhairavi are easy to learn. They have a lucid structure, lilting rhythm, and lyrical beauty. Due to these inherent features, they are widely used for dance too.

Different Milieu

Here, it will be appropriate to mention the contributions of Swarajathis by the eminent Varanakartas like the Tanjore quartet. Besides, Syama Sastri has also contributed in the area of Swarajathis. His Swarajathis are vastly different from the type of Swarajathis described earlier. They are difficult to master and can be attempted only after the student has achieved a certain degree of proficiency in ragabhava and layagnana. More about it later.

Varnam : Varnam is universally considered as the stronghold of classical training in Karnatic tradition.

Varnams are scholarly compositions. They are elaborate melodies replete with raga bhava. A Varnam contains raga ranchaka combinations, Viseshas, Sancharas and the several Apoorva Prayogas and Datu Prayogas that the raga admits of. Varnams are learnt and practised with great care and assiduity by both vocalists and instrumentalists. The practice of Varnam in two or three Kalas considerably helps one

in the artistic, polished and stylised rendering of pieces and ensures voice culture. To an instrumentalist it develops his finger skill, improving his technique and style of execution. It also contributes towards effective rendering of raga, niraval and swaram which is a cultivated art in Karnatic music. It helps to set Pallavi in three kalas too.

There are two types of Varnams : Tana Varnam and Pada Varnam. Tana Varnam is a composition of Pallavi, Anupallavi, Mukthayi swara, Charanam, Ethukadai Swaras. There is no Sahitya in Mukthayi swaras and Ethukadai swaras. Tana Varnam helps one to "experience" the raga in totality. They are set in Madhyama Kala. They have less 'pada aksharas' and also have swaras in rhythmic patterns of 2-3-5 which are highly suited for singing Tanams. A deeper study of Tana Varnam reveals that the Swara Korvais closely resemble Tanams and can be sung in that vein. Even though Tana Varnam are set in Madhyama Kala it is desirable to practise them in two or three kalas.

The lyrics of a Varnam are generally of Deiva Sthuthi, Guru Sthuti, or Raja Sthuthi, depending upon the composer.

Pada Varnam : This is also known as Atta Varnam as it is ideally suited for dance. They are similar to Tana Varnams so far as the angas, Pallavi, Anupallavi, Mukthayiswara and Ethukadai Swaras are concerned. Since Pada Varnams are rendered in Chowka Kala, the respective raga bhava and gamaka prayogas can be graphically visualised. The lyrics reflect nayaka-nayaki bhava. Pada Varnam too provides an excellent exercise for the voice. It helps in the rendering of Padams at a later stage.

Varnakartas : Varnams encompass all the minute and most beautiful aspects of Karnatic music. Quite a number of Varnakartas have made outstanding contributions to this end. Each one has masterpieces of rare quality to his credit. A comparison between these gems would be superfluous. However, one could benefit by learning a number of Varnams, a variety of them, composed by eminent Varnakartas.

Tracing the contribution of eminent Varnakartas, the following names come to mind :

- (1) Margadarshi Pachhimiriyam Adiappaya
- (2) Pallavi Gopala Iyer
- (3) Veenai Kuppiar
- (4) Thiruvottiyur Thyagaiyer (Veena Kuppiar's son)
- (5) Veena Kuppiar's disciples
Kothavasal Venkataramaiya
- (6) Violin Ponnusami
- (7) Pallavi Vidwan Sitharamayya
- (8) Shatkala Narasaiya
- (9) Muthiaya Bhagavathar
- (10) Govindasamy Ayya
- (11) Merattur Veerabhadrayya
- (12) Melattur Venkatrama Sastri
- (13) Tanjore Quartet

I would like to enumerate here briefly on Varnakartas, Veena Kuppiar, Pallavi Gopala Iyer and Marga Darshi Pachhimiriyam Adiappaya.

Veena Kuppiar : Born at Tiruvottiyur, he was the prime disciple of Saint Thyagaraja. He was a great master in playing veena and violin besides vocal. He had composed many Tana Varnams and Kritis. He adopted the mudra "Gopala Dasa". He was a great exponent of Pallavi, and was bestowed with the title of "Gana Chakravarti" in acknowledgement of his high attainment in all aspects of music.

His rendering of Raga Narayana-gowla was of such high order that he was affectionately called "Narayana-gowla Kuppiar". Some of his famous Varnams are *Inthachala* (Begada) in Adi Tala; *Inta Chowka* (Bilahari) *Sami nee pai Marulu* (Ananda Bhairavi); *Vanajakshi* (Reethingowlai); *Maguva Ninai* (Narayanagowla) — Ata Tala.

Pachhimiriyam Adiappaya

He is known as "Tana Varna Margadarshi Pachhimiriyam Adiappaya". Some of his illustrious disciples were Syama Shastri, Ghanam Krishna Iyer and Pallavi Gopala Iyer. There could be none who did not know or had not heard *Viriboni*, the Bhairavi Ata Tala Varnam. That is a standing monument illustrating the greatness of this Margadarshi.

Pallavi Gopala Iyer

A disciple of Pachhimiriyam Adiappaya, he was a "Samasthana" Vidwan of the Tanjore court during the reign of Serfoji Maharajah and Raja Amarsingh. Special mention should be made about his three famous Varnams in Ata Tala — *Vanajakshi* (Kalyani), *Kanakangi* (Todi), *Inthachalamu* (Kambodi). Besides, he had composed many Tana Varnams, and Kritis. His Varnams are

ideal for voice exercise and training and are taught only after reaching an advanced stage.

He was the first composer of Tana Varnas to do away with the concluding section, the Anubandha. "It consisted of a Sahitya part and a solfa part. This Sahitya served to complete the idea in the Sahitya of the rest of the Varna". With the omission of the Anubandha the two halves of the Tana Varna became balanced.

To come back to the Swarajathi by Sri Syama Sastri. He had composed three Swarajathis in Ragas Todi, Bhairavi and Yadukula Kambodi. The salient features of his format are :

(1) Raga Bhava, (2) Sahitya excellence & (3) Laya perfection.

Weighty Compositions

His Swarajathis are compositions with Pallavis and Charanas (the Charanas having Swara and Sahitya). One distinguishing excellence that can be credited to Sastri's compositions is Swarakshara where Sahitya and Swara are identical. Another significant feature is that each Charana is handled in the progressive order of the Swaras. These Swarjathis are normally included

in the repertoire of a concert to embellish the grandeur of Niraval and Kalpana swaras. As they contain all aspects of Kritis, they are usually sung in the middle of a concert, with niraval and swaras thereby adding an extra dimension to the concert.

Pioneers' Rare Foresight

The pioneers and forefathers of Karnatic Music have revealed a rare foresight in their concept of training. By gradually advancing from Sarali Varisai to the Geetham and Varnams in this prescribed order, the student subconsciously develops "Swara gnana", "Laya gnana", "Raga Bhava" and voice culture.

We then proceed towards learning Kritis composed by the Trinity. With sufficient application, devotion and dedication one can obtain the capacity to sing Ragas, Niraval and Kalpana swaras with relative ease.

Over and above rigorous training, flair and natural talent, one must have "bhakti", "Guru Bhakti" and the compulsion to listen always to good music by great exponents. By doing so, we can further our talent and become musically aware and educated.

DIARY 1988-89

The Music Academy, Madras, has brought out a *Diary 1988-1989*, which contains an abundance of valuable musical information on the work of the Academy over 60 years. A series of appendices throw light on matters like the names of the musicians who took part in the conferences, brief details of the subjects of the demonstrations presented annually since 1927. Last, but not least, is the series of short biographical sketches of all the Vidwans who presided over the annual conferences on each page. An article entitled "Origins of Indian Music" is a highly useful reference for students and researchers. The large number of photographs, showing many past stalwarts of Carnatic Music enhance the beauty of the *Diary*, a publication that is a shining feather in the cap of this great national institution of Art.

KSHETRAYYA PADAMS*

By

Dr. B. RAJANIKANTA RAO

In an opera or a musico-dance drama the emotional presentation does not get evenly distributed throughout the play, but becomes concentrated in certain songs occurring in a situation of heightened emotions, the rest of the presentation of the drama being less emotional, conventional and more often dull.

Like the Art-song of Europe, the incidental songs in Yaksha ganams, the padam (singular of padavali — as in Chandidas padavali, Meera padavali, Annamayya padamulu and Kshetravaya padamulu) of India are such lyrics with high concentration of emotion containing dramatic dialogues and woven round dramatic situations.

Lyrics Charged with Emotion

Annamacharya was the first great composer of such lyrics in Telugu which are estimated to be 30,000. A century or so later, Kshetravaya followed in the same manner composing thousands of lyrics in Telugu.

These lyrics of Kshetravaya reflect human love-life in all its dimensions. From the most faithful and well-behaved husband to the most wayward vagabond adventurer, from the most domestic innocent and artless wedded wife to the turmegant coquette of high society loving out of wedlock and a cluster of courtesans of varied propensities, from the most sincere love to the purely

mercenary type, all are portrayed in these lyrics.

Like Annamayya the fore-runner, his successor Kshetravaya too was not an ascetic running away from life, but true and sincere lover of life as well as 'the Lord', the Supreme Soul. According to their crede, in the ultimate analysis, there is only one male covering all perfections and imperfections of masculinity represented in the hero and the dedicatee of their lyrics who is Lord Venkatesa or Muvvagopala, and the heroines (the Nayikas) represent all humans, the author himself, you, me and everyone else. As such, sex as depicted in an uninhibited manner in all the medieval forms of art and literature is not a taboo with them. With these thoughts in the background, let us go through these lyrics.

The Master Lyricist

Kshetravaya's Padams (lyrics) are replete with evidences of this thorough insight into, and knowledge of, all the traditional vidyas like Vedanta, Sastra and the sixty-four traditional Indian arts known as Chatus-Shashti kalas.

All the definitions and attributes revealed get merged in the last two, which lead to the unattached, indefinable (without attributes), universal individual into which our great master lyricist Kshetravaya evolved himself and got acclaimed as Kshetravaya and, with his

*Paper presented at the Symposium held on Nov. 26-27, 1988, at Bombay.

spiritual halo and cultural glory, he illuminated, and won high esteem, of the land and the people, temple yards and royal courts, and saints and kings, right from the northern banks of the Krishna down to the southern banks of the Kaveri and far southward upto Rameswaram.

Product of Experience

Kshetrappa can be compared to a master playwright-poet. He did not write a single play but every lyric of his portrays into a piquant dramatic situation. The situation and episodes in his lyrics were not artificial products from the ivory tower of a court poet's wild imagination but true pictures of human love-life. They also included some of his own most sublime experiences and some factual experiences of mundane life.

These gems effulged radiant rays — soliloquy of the hero or heroine, solicitation of one to the other, each prevailing upon the confidante to mediate between them after a lovers' tiff, each complaining against the other to the confidante, the confidante pleading with each to be kind and considerate to the other and get reconciled, the heroine complaining about the 'other woman' carrying tales to her Lord against herself and keeping Him away, her own jealousy against 'the other woman' who kept the Lord away from herself, wailings against the 'woman' who intruded between the couple and got all the favours due to the heroine for herself from the Lord. In short, Kshetrappa's Padams are a compendium, an encyclopaedia, of human nature in love-life in its entirety.

The linguistic style adopted by Anamacharya, and later brought to a perfection in the Padams of Kshetrappa, derives its legacy first from the flowery narratives of folk tales and folk ballads of our mothers and grandmothers. One gets thrilled by the expressions of lilting cadences of speech, of characters like Satyabhama or Usha in the dance plays of Kuchipudi and Melattur. The same fountain fed Kshetrappa's creative pen. In Kshetrappa's Padams we find popular idioms and proverbs usually uttered in such a way recalling the rhythm and melody of a mountain streamlet or a forestbrook, by village housewife or a young bride or by women-folk in their leisurely chatter, with all their intrinsic beauties of the lisp and natural cadence. We also come across sweet and elegant conversational phrases of lovers capable of expressing subtle feeling of love, jealousy, langour and passion. Let us 'taste' some of his Padams, comprising among others the first and the one in the last series he is supposed to have composed.

Fluency in Expression

Sripati Sutubariki (Ananda Bhairavi) . Parakiya — Anya Sambhoga Dukhita : All those scholars who categorised the heroine in this lyric as 'Parakiya' must be having their own strong reasons — like, the stipulation in the doctrine of 'Bhakti' the devotee's relation to his deity is compared to that of a wedded woman making love to a paramour out of wedlock surrendering herself to him in all earnestness, giving up everything else in life. The spotlight in this lyric is more on the deity's showing more favours on another woman,

while heroine's anguish for him is heightened by her jealousy for the other woman.

All the biographers of Kshetrappa are unanimous in their consideration for this Padam to be his earliest composition, which came out of him after a real penance and pining for the Lord in the sanctum of Muvvagopala. As such as the heroine in the theme of the lyric is identical with Kshetrappa himself, while the other woman who was enjoying the favours of the Lord, and became the target of jealousy of the heroine (Kshetrappa) is Mohanangi, a Devadasi who was a schoolmate love of Kshetrappa prior to her dedicating her life for the service of the Lord. Only a rebuff from Mohanangi in reply to advances of love made by Kshetrappa caused him to be thrown into a penance at the end of which in a trance, this lyric came out, to be followed by thousands later.

To our mind, it occurs that one cannot rule out the heroine in this lyric being a 'Swiya' — a wedded woman making love to her own husband, who is engaged in amorous approaches to another woman. It is likely to have happened like this. After getting a rebuff from Mohanangi, that unless he composed lyrics about the Lord, she would not even look at him, Kshetrappa or Varadaya as he was supposed to be called at that stage went home in distress. His wife Rukmini, who only could see Muvvagopala in him, inspired him to go to the temple and invoke the Lord, where by he would be relieved of his anguish. After some days of penance, he had a trance in which, the triangular play of love and jealousy in which

Rukmini, himself and Devadasi were alternatively envisioned by him as that consisting of himself, Muvvagopala and Devadasi, wherein, Rukmini and himself were to be identical, and himself and Muvvagopala to be identical, whereas, Devadasi remained as the other woman in both the cases. That is how, in our view this first lyric of Kshetrappa came out as a result of his spiritual trance and lyrical argument.

When I am unable to bear the onslaught of cupid,
are you angry Muvvagopala that I aspire for your love ?

Staying in that woman's house, like a servant, day and night,
does it behove you, Muvvagopala, to go on with cheap chatter ?

Swiya Nayika

Ninnujoochi (Punnagaravarali) : The heroine in this lyric is a wedded wife (Swiya) who is ardently in love with her husband who in her estimate is Muvvagopala incarnate and she is quite confident of his affection for her although she is of a modest temperament (Madhya). Kshetrappa returned home after a few months' absence, which period he spent in the premises of Muvvagopala's temple, engaged in penance culminating in a trance and outcome of the first lyric *Sripati sutu*. In the present lyric, it is felt that Kshetrappa depicted verbatim, the welcoming sentiments expressed by his wife Rukmini on seeing him back home after an absence of three or four months. Like the heroine in this lyric we can get a picture of Kshetrappa's wife to be a domesticated, young bride with timidity and shyness at the start and gradual assertion and self-confidence, but, she would always like to be good to her husband in spite of

his being wayward at times (i.e., ut-tama).

It has become possible to see you, after such a long time; Four or five moons passed away since I saw you last, O Muvvagopala !

Yester-night in my dream, when you appeared, as it were real, before me, rising from my bed, O Vishnu, having searched and failed to find you, with upper cloth soaked in tears, I pined away in grief; may you have thought of me or not, Oh ! fruit of my austerities !

Not a single pleasure, ever since you left me, no dinner, no betel and nut, no entertainment, no sleep; as if, when the sun has set amidst wilderness, darkness and rain, I grope like one, who is completely drenched and lost her way in woods.

Comparing with Rama

Rama Rama Pranasakhi (Bhairavi) : Here the heroine is Parakiya and Pro-shita. The hero is characterised by the rhetoricians as 'uppati' — a para-mour. In this lyric, the hero's anguish for his beloved at his native place is narrated by him, when he was away from home. The heroine is characterised as parakiya i.e., a Devadasi who is not free to have an affair, and if she has it will be clandestine. Kshetrappa composed this when he visited Bhadrachalam where he was reminded of his love for Mohanangi, his Devadasi-friend. This is the only place, where Rama's name is mentioned, suffering from separation from Sita, in comparison with the anguish of the hero, Muvvagopala, who is identified with the composer himself.

Blessed be Rama, having been separated from his beloved wife, how could he endure ? Thinking of the lotus eyed one, my heart gets torn with grief, what am I to say, alas.

Were not the calls of parrots, in this time, as they are now, piercing his ears like lances ? Did not the moon, then, like now burn him like a scorching fire ? Not knowing day and night passing like this, did he not have to pine away in his heart ? Ever since I have been separated from my beloved, my mind is in absolute disarray !

Would cupid like a sworn enemy have not teased the prince like this ? would the call of the Cuckoo not have caused him anguish and distress ? would food and sleep, by far, have not been insipid to him, but welcome ? Ever since I have been separated from my fair one I am subjected to the onslaught of cupid !

Would he too have on demand from her not made promises many a time ? when his gem of a woman was away were not his eyes filled with tears ? with a vicious type of love would he have Put up with courage and will ? My chum who beckoned me with passion, calling me Muvvagopala has hoodwinked me, alas, what am I to do ?

Choodani Koodani Nindalu : Heroine : Parakiya, Parodha, Pratibhachatura.

Here, the heroine is a married woman, not independent to extend her love to her lover. She is quite intelligent in the art of concealing her secret. If a Devadasi, expected to live an austere celibate life, makes love to a person she is considered parakiya. Whatever scandals and criticism have been attributed to the character of Muvvagopala in this lyric and in what-so-ever manner the heroine justifies her complete surrender to her Lord and Lord's Benevolence towards her, are to be interpreted subtly, that in the activities in the daily life of Kshetrappa, there could be nothing that can be

characterised as mundane or down-to-earth, and all that he depicted in his lyrics, in spite of the predominance of eroticism with all its bearings, can be construed to have been inspired by his sincere devotion to the Lord, throughout.

They have concocted scandals, out of things they had never seen, and events that never happened dear; Is there anybody, who never talked ill, of me and Hari, among people ?

Have I actually stood and had a straight look ever at his face ? Have I ever embraced him to fulfilment of my desire ? Have I ever suckled the honey out of his sugary pair of lips ? Sister, because of the only thing, I said, he is a charming chum.

O dear, have I ever cherished or have I told anyone that I am fit to be his beloved ? Have I ever had the pleasure to hum or listen to his lyrics ? When they are bent upon achieving some thing, Would they not act upon their true intentions ?

O fair lady, has ever the lord Of Muvvapuri known about my heart, and out of condescension made me, lose myself in sport of love ?

O virgin, if it proves to be a lesson to those scandal-mongers, I shall be arranging a special service, With flowers to our lord in the most fitting manner

On the Divine Consort

Maguvatana Kelika (Mohanam) : This Padam portrays an event in Kshetrappa's life when he stayed away for a night in the temple of Varadaraja of Kanchi. After witnessing the last act of service to the Lord, the Ekantaseva, or sending the Divine consort to

the bridal chamber along with the Lord, he rested against one of the pillars during the night. At dawn, Kshetrappa had a vision of the divine consort Perundevi coming out of the bridal chamber and out came this inspired lyric. As such, the heroine in this lyric is Swiya, (wedded wife) and Divya i.e., a divine woman. The contention of certain scholars who categorised her as a courtesan is obviously erroneous.

There the spouse divine emerges out of the bridal chamber ! Awakening amorous Varada of Kanchi and announcing day-break;

With untwined garland of roses dropping from her plaited hair, And intertwined riddles of encircling rounds of necklace, with a haze of sleep hanging over the half opened eyes, As the pair of feet got entangled causing a faltering gait ...

Chakkani Dayagalada (Dhanyasi) : Heroine in this Padam is a courtesan (Samanya). It is discovered that this lyric was composed by Kshetrappa to meet a challenge thrown at him at Chidambaram. In the 'Citsabha' pavilion of the Nataraja temple of Chidambaram, he was asked to portray a courtesan greeting both Siva (Nataraja) and Vishnu (Varadaraja or Govindaraja) as suitors waiting on her, in a conversational dialogue of common civilities, bringing out the most sublime spiritual message. Cevandi Linga in this song is discovered by the author to be none other than Lord Nataraja, the former name being his title for his prowess in the 'Urdhwa tandava' in which the tip of the toe of his right foot touches his forehead thereby bringing the anklet on the foot near his right ear (cevi+ande meaning the anklet touching the ear). Kshetrappa

ya succeeded in meeting the challenge, by making the courtesan address two suitors simultaneously, with all civil manners, but subtly suggesting that either of them is equal to or neither of them is better than a third suitor (Muvvagopala) to whom she is already dedicated in Seva. It is also our surmise, that this was the occasion which entitled Kshetrappa to be addressed, out of high reverence, Kshetrappa, and that the title must have been bestowed by such a spiritual savant like Sadguru Sri Bodhendra Sankaracharya of Kamakoti Petham of Kanchi (a contemporary of Kshetrappa).

Isn't your grace abounding ?
this is your home, Cevandi Linga
Your coming here
is so great, O Varada of Kanchi;

I have come to see you, chum, O Cevandi
Linga;

I know why you haven't visited my home
O Kanchi Varada;

Since you are here, I have come here
Cevandi Linga,

How come, whose home is this after all
O Kanchi Varada;

Let it be so, I shall argue later,
O Cevandi Linga

Certainly we shall stay together
O Kanchi Varada;

Who is it that laughs in this bed-chamber,
Cevandi Linga ?

But for Muvvagopala, who else can it be,
Kanchi Varada ?

Kshetrappa's Challenge

Vadaraka Popove (Kambhoji) : Nayika : Swiya; Proudha; Virahotka, Nayaka, Satha — Here, the hero is crafty; hollow-hearted and ever treacherous to his love. The heroine is the most ideal wife, who is quite sensi-

tive to pleasures and pains of love-game. The situation is where she tries to explain away to her confidant her husband's absence, with undying optimism, in spite of her lover's wayward nature.

The story goes to say, that this lyric was composed by Kshetrappa in the court of King Vijaya Raghava at Tanjore reciting all but the last stanza and throwing a challenge to the poets and scholars in the courts to complete it by the time he returned from a pilgrimage to Rameswaram. Since none of them felt competent to complete, it was left only to Kshetrappa to complete it after he returned from his pilgrimage.

Enough with your prattle, why would he
come at all,
he is not wanted here, ask him not to come,
That was a golden age, and this is another
birth,

I don't know what he is to me, and
what I am to him, my friend,

Every moment expecting him to be coming
today or tomorrow,
due to incessant heaving of many a hot sigh,
my dear,
having the lips parched up, how many
moonlight fiery nights,
have I got to pass off, what else is there
to talk

Hoping that my beloved would be coming
any moment,
having set looks on the thoroughfare, got
tired,
counted passing months and got bored,
and suppressed
my uncontrollable love;
how many springs resounding with the calls of
the cuckoos and parrots have I passed off,
why empty talk ?

O my dear friend, I asked for omens
foreboding Muvvagopala's arrival,
having seen my friends who have desired
and met their beloveds,

I pined away in grief;
O my god, with this body, still have I to
see his face ?
our first meet was more than enough.

Divine Inspiration

Vedukato Nadachukonna (Devagandhari) : In this lyric, the heroine whom Muvvagopala espouses, can be categorised as of courtesan variety and Swadhinapatika, i.e., having her lover to be the most faithful one. This is a very important lyric throwing light on the autobiographical details of the composer Kshetrappa's life. Here the composer identifies himself with the heroine. This lyric contains names of three kings in whose courts Kshetrappa composed thousands of Padams, having been possessed and inspired by his Lord Muvvagopala. And this Padam was composed at the sanctum of Muvvagopala in Kshetrappa's native place Movva, when he visited it around 55 years of age.

The central idea of this lyric is that it was Muvvagopala who possessed and inspired Kshetrappa to compose each time, thousands of lyrics, whenever and wherever or whichever king's court he might have visited and that his compositions pleased not only the royal patron who invited him to compose but also the divine patron, who always hovered over the dais. And this divine patron was the presiding deity of village Movva in Krishna District since seven and three generations, considered by the devoted people of the area to be their treasure (Kannaaci), and that he espoused the heroine or the composer Kshetrappa himself.

The Prince among libertines
who sought after pleasure

Since seven and three generations,
it is said, He is our treasure,
Muvvagopala espouses me
my lord with peerless grace,

When Tirumala Nayak of Madura
having offered liberal gifts,
ordered me to be seated in his presence
and asked for the best of lyrics,
Out came two thousand
which the host was asked to count;
And to the Lord hovering over the dais
the pleasure was of boundless measure.,

Getting over earlier misgivings
when Vijaya Raghava Nayak of Tanjore,
In response to many an emissary,
was promptly visited by me,
In the cool garden retreat,
Straightaway with a thousand lyrics
When the Lord was brought into communion,
he had me honoured that day.,

When the powerful Badsha of Golconda
having offered many a gift,
Desired to hold a contest
of lyrics with Tulasimurti,
My Lord Muvvagopala had
a thousand and five hundred lyrics
Composed in forty days,
having possessed and inspired me.

Gaddari Vagala (Kalyani) : Swiya —
Madhya — Jyeshtha — Kanishtha.

The devoted wedded wife is the heroine here but the hero is too civil to more than one woman ! Scholars say that this and such other lyrics of Kshetrappa contain some suggestive significance of philosophical bearing. The heroine and the hero are the jivatma and paramatma, while the other woman in between is Maya or illusion of life.

What is the name of that woman that lay
in between you and me ?
O Muvvagopala you're too smart in sport,
I heard the tinkling of bangles.

In the same way you enjoyed with me earlier
did you have it with her also ?
Does she, in the same manner come here
every day ?
Exposed is your nature, my lord, father
of Cupid,
one should never believe you,
[Muvvagopala your wares are stale.,

*Sarasijakshi (Todi) : Parakiya — Sa-
khi — Siksha lakshanam.*

The messenger-maid or confidant
consoles the heroine that the latter
should not take to heart the displea-
sure and a little rebuke or chiding from
her Lord since all through her life he
was affectionate and protecting her.
This lyric was contended to be the last
or one of the last compositions of the
composer, wherein he cast himself as
the heroine and he remained contented
ever after to be the bond-maid of the
Lord as a devotee but not to think of
himself as a masculine philanderer or
identifying himself to be one with the
Lord.

Fulfilled is the purpose of your life.
O fair-eyed young
woman due to the touch of the hand of
Muvvagopala, the supreme Soul. !

Having won your confidence and your offers
of surrender,
and received you with fondling care and
placed you on his bosom,
day and night when he remained in
your apartment,
young maid, in a fit of anger, should
he not raise his hand ?

O fair-eyed one, when you shouted, did
he not smile away ?
Did he not adorn you with all suitable
ornaments ?
Woman, did he not brush your hair, and
beautify it with blossoms ?
Should he not threaten you, in a moment
of displeasure ?

Having kept you in privacy, to ward
off evil-eye,
Muvvagopala having rendered services
to you,
as and when you wanted him, did he not
favour you ?
O my God, after all this, should he not
chide you my dear ?

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THE NRISIMHA JIHVAA*

By
P. K. SRINIVASAN, B.Sc.,

Ramanujam and Bhaskaran are two thick friends. The former is an art lover, while the latter has no interest at all. Ramanujam is surprised one day to see his friend Bhaskaran attending a Bharatanatya performance. At the end of it he meets him and an interesting as well as instructive conversation takes place :

Ramanujam : Hello, Bhaskar ! How is it you are here attending the dance performance ? I couldn't believe my eyes, I say !

Bhaskar : Don't you know that I am interested in dance performances for the past few months ?

Ram : How you got changed so suddenly ? You had been consistently refusing to accompany me for witnessing dance performances of even reputed artists. What has happened now ?

Bha : I will tell you how this transformation in me has taken place. My officer's daughter is learning Bharatanatyam. He treats me as one of his family members and not his subordinate. So I had to assist him in connection with the Arangetram arrangements. In addition I had to accompany his family members while attending some lectures and demonstrations on dance. So without an option I was forced to hear those lectures and as a result I had started imbibing a taste for this fine art. I had never imagined that this art would be so interesting and absorbing. Nowadays I really find pleasure in witnessing a Bharatanatyam performance.

Ram : I am really happy that at last you have also started tasting our glorious culture. By the way how was today's performance ?

Bha : Very fine. In fact I enjoyed the Dasavatharam dance very much and in particular the Nrisimhavatara. I was able to follow all the gestures depicting the various incidents, thanks to the enlightenment. I got in various lectures.

Ram : Yes. It was the major portion in that item.

Bha : The scene of Lord Nrisimha chasing Hiranyakasipu and then tearing him is still before me. But one thing I could never believe is that how such a beautiful lady could look so ferocious with round eyes as if bulging out, terrible to see, the fingers curved spread out indicating the act of tearing to pieces and above all the tongue drooping out from the wide opened mouth.

*This 'imaginary dialogue' by the author is based on Jihvaa Bheda in "Natya Shastra".

- Ram : Reminding you of Calcutta Kali I suppose !
- Bha : Exactly so. That hanging tongue completed the Nrisimha picture.
- Ram : My dear friend, it is precisely the thing that should not be shown in that manner.
- Bha : How do you say that ? Nrisimha also was drinking the blood of the Asura just like Kali.
- Ram : The drinking of the blood is there, of course. But for portraying Nrisimha the tongue position is different.
- Bha : You mean to say that there is a specific one for Nrisimha?
- Ram : Perfectly you are correct. As per *Natya Sastra* there are six varieties of tongue positions called Jihvaa Bheda and one out of the six is exclusively assigned to indicate Nrisimha.
- Bha : Can you please give its name and explain it ?
- Ram : It is called 'VAKRAA'. King Asokamalla in his *Nrtyaadhy-
aayi* defines it as follows :

"Prasrutasyaan nathaagre yaa
saa vakraa Nriharou mathaa"

Keeping the mouth open and stretched, the tongue should be raised and its tip curved upwards. *Nritharatnavali* is still specific and defines as :—

'Ucchaagraa vivruthaas yasthaa
Vakraa Nrihari Darsane'

And this unambiguously states for showing Nrisimha and Nrisimha alone, nothing else.

- Bha : What about the version of *Natyasastra Sangraha* ?
- Ram : As far as Jihvaa Bhedas are concerned all texts concur and there is no second opinion. It defines 'Vakraa' as :

"Vyaathhaasyasthonnataagraa cha
Vakraa Nrihari roopane"

I hope now you will agree that a face with the tongue hanging down from the open mouth like that of Kali is not correct to portray Nrisimha as per *Natya Sastra* tradition. The other five variations of the tongue carry more than one meaning, but as far as this Vakraa is concerned it has only one use viz., to indicate Nrisimha.

- Bha : Now I agree with you fully. By the way can you briefly tell me the other five Jihvaa Bhedas also and what they signify ?
- Ram : With pleasure. Apart from Vakraa, the other five positions are Rijvee, Sriikkaanugaa, Nathaa, Lolaa and Lehinee (or Avalehinee).
- Rijvee lolaa lehinee cha Vakraa Sriikkanugonnatha shodethi rasanaa
praahaasokamallo Nripaagranihi"
- Now I will explain one by one. If the tongue is stretched straight from an extended mouth it is called Rijvee. This indicates tiredness and the thirst of wild animals.
- Bha : Please tell me the Samskrita sloka also as it is easier to memorise and retain in mind.
- Ram : All right. Here it is for *Rijvee*.

"Rijvee Prasaaritha proktha vivrutha Vadane sathi /
Svaapadaanaam pipaasaayaam Srame Chaishaa Vidheeyathey. / /

Then in *Sriikkaanuga*, the tongue licks the corner of the mouth (srik) to indicate relishing of tasty food, anger etc.

Yaa Jihvaa leedasrikka saa
Prokthaa Sriikaanugaa rushi /
Svaadhu bhakshye chaivamanyey
jneyaa abhinayaa api. /

Nathaa is another variety. Wherein the tongue is raised while keeping the mouth open. Its purpose is to show yawning and for seeing things inside the mouth as in the case of young Krishna showing the entire universe to Yasodha.

"Prasaaritha mukhey Yaa vonnatha jihvonnathaa mathaa /
Saa vaktraanthastha Veekshaayaam Jhrim bhabhinayane pi cha" / /

The fifth type is 'Lola' where the tongue starts quivering in the mouth moving to and fro. It is used to depict Vethaalas (Goblins) and for ridiculing. It is defined as :

Videernaasye chala Lolaa Vethaalaadhi Vidambhaney /

The sixth and last one is 'Lehinee' also termed as *Avalehinee*. Here the tongue licks the teeth and lips and is used to show the act of licking and all ideas which demand such an action.

"Dhanthoshtow lihathee jihvaa
Lehinee sammathaa muney"

These are six kinds of variations of the tongue in *Natya Sastra*.

Bha : You have taken the tongue, the smallest part that is mostly hidden inside the mouth and have elaborated in detail, all about it. Knowing these intricacies I am sure I will relish the dance art all the more. Thank you very much Ramanujam for enlightening me.

Note : In this conversation if the marginally noted letters alone are read, you will find the name of an Apsara (celestial damsel), expert in dancing, repeated continuously : Rambha.

Courtesy : Sankarabaranam Journal

BOOK REVIEW

Abhinaya Sara Samputa. By Chetlur Narayana Ayyangar; and *Abhinaya Navanita*. By Chetlur Narayana Ayyangar and Tanjore Panchapakesa Nattuvanar. Published by the Music Academy, 306, T. T. K. Road, Madras-600 014. 1986. Pp 151; and Pp 82. Price : Rs. 20.

The Tanjore Rajas who fostered the art of music and dance and provided a congenial atmosphere for scholars who wrote treatises on the art were greatly responsible for making it a citadel of culture and arts in the latter half of the 19th century. Of the last generation of the scholars were Sabhapati Iyer of Mannargudi and Madabusi Saraswathi Tiruvenkatacharya of Nidamangalam whose collaboration with Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya was responsible for the first publication of the Telugu script of the *Abhinaya Darpana* of Nandikeswara, together with the *Bharata-rasa-praharana* (of which I have a precious copy). The great Ananda Coomaraswami published an English translation of the above work titled *Mirror of Gesture* (Luzac & Sons, London).

The present publication in Tamil, the *Abhinaya Sara Samputa* is a text of this art compiled with the help of Tiruvenkatacharya of Nidamangalam. Chetlur Narayana Ayyangar who compiled this work first wrote the *Abhinaya Navanita*, which was published by the Music Academy. It deals with Hastha abhinaya. The *Sara Samputa*, also published by the Music Academy, explains the Bhavas and Rasas, the type of heroines and heros (Nayakis and Nayakas) whose

moods have to be portrayed, abhinaya in all its facets and interpretation of select classical Padas for abhinaya. Both these volumes are a treasure to the dancer, the teacher and connoisseur alike.

These two volumes, originally published by the Music Academy, Madras, in 1961, separately with the learned introduction by Shri V. Raghavan are now brought out in a handy single volume with the aid of a grant from the Sangeet Natak Akademy, New Delhi. The profound merit of the single volume lies in its lucid explanation of the technical terms like Siro, Nethra, Greeva and Hastha Bhedas, and comprehensive Hastha Lakshana with explanations and illustrations. Perhaps, the seminal chapter in this volume is the section dealing with "Bhava Prakasam". We get a sensitive exposition of the gesture language to be executed by the artistes for 20 classic Padams (in Tamil and Sanskrit) with illustrative examples, a veritable storehouse of abhinaya. At least many of the mistakes in the earlier edition could have been avoided in the present re-issue.

— N. R. BHUVARAHAN
(Camp, Ottawa, Canada)